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MAZZINI'S ESSAYS.

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MAZZINI.

ITH the political resurrection of modern Italy four names are associated. The unity of the Italian people was achieved under the kingship of Victor Emmanuel, by the aid of the skilful diplomacy of Cavour, and by means of the sword of the heroic Garibaldi. These men, differing from one another in various ways, had this in common —that they were essentially men of action. But the fourth name is that of one who combined action with thought in his own great and noble personality ; of one who suffered imprisonment and exile, and who lived to become the prophet and spiritual hero of his nation. But Mazzini is not the prophet of modern Italy alone, but also of the whole modern world. While an ardent patriot and advocate of struggling nationalities, no writer or thinker of our century has felt more deeply than he the solidarity of mankind ; and hence he becomes for us a true moral teacher, whose fervent words are as much needed in England, the country of his exile, as in Italy, the land of his birth. In this country there are not a few who owe to the intercourse they enjoyed with Mazzini their insight into the needs of modern life, their faith in progress, and their regard for the people. And it may with safety be affirmed that, apart from the approval or disapproval of specific opinions advocated by Mazzini, no one can be brought into close contact with his mind without being thereby roused to new endeavour or awakened to higher conceptions of human good than he had previously known. Few men could have been more at variance in opinion than Mazzini and Carlyle ; but the tribute rendered

spontaneously by the force-worshipping sage of Chelsea to the Italian democratic enthusiast is one of the most pleasing episodes in Carlyle's life. And the impressive scene in Genoa at the unveiling of the Mazzini statue in that city in 1882, when the vast concourse gazed in absolute silence on the features of their great citizen, and then burst forth into transports of enthusiastic joy, proved—if proof were needed—that the new Italy has not forgotten her prophet and liberator.

Born in Genoa in 1805, Joseph Mazzini was brought up not only in love of country, but also in the "worship of equality" through the democratic principles of his parents, "whose bearing towards high or low was ever the same." He tells us that while walking one Sunday in April 1821 with his mother and a friend of the family in the streets of Genoa, they were addressed by "a tall black-bearded man, with a severe and energetic countenance, and a fiery glance that I have never since forgotten. He held out a white handkerchief towards us, merely saying, 'For the refugees of Italy.' My mother and friend dropped some money into the handkerchief, and he turned from us to put the same request to others." The man was one Rini, a captain in the national guard instituted by the Piedmontese in their insurrection against Austria in March 1821. The insurrection was crushed, and many of the revolutionists had flocked to Genoa, there to await another opportunity. From this incident dates the spiritual new birth of Mazzini; the fruitful idea of struggle for the right, for Italy, for mankind, falling on fertile soil and bearing during the following half century the rich harvest of a sorrowful but inexpressibly precious life. That was the first day that a confused idea presented itself to his mind that "we Italians *could* and therefore *ought* to struggle for the liberty of our country." This idea continued to take ever stronger possession of his nature. Among the young students of the Genoa University he sat silent and absorbed; and even childishly determined to dress always in black as in mourning for his country. Gradually a little circle of friends, foremost among whom were the young Ruffinis, gathered around Mazzini; to them he communicated his thoughts, and to

them he was bound by ties of the strongest affection. Indeed, the subtle blending of keen intellectual enthusiasm with deep human love is perceptible all through the career of this great Italian, whereby he is proclaimed a true compatriot of Dante.

It was by the study of this great poet, whom he regarded as the prophet of his nation, that Mazzini's national sentiment was deepened into religious enthusiasm; and it was from the artistic side that Mazzini's patriotic feeling was first kindled. Art is the expression in forms of beauty of a nation's life; and Mazzini found himself in a land without any art but that of the past, because it had no life but in the past. "It was necessary to interrogate the slumbering, latent, and unconscious life of our people; to lay the hand upon the half-frozen heart of the nation; to count its rare pulsations, and reverently learn therefrom the purpose and duty of Italian genius." But Italy had been scornfully described as a "geographical expression;" while to produce art there must be liberty of development for Italy's own rich life. Mazzini therefore turned resolutely to the political problem—how to gain freedom and unity for Italy—and forthwith joined the secret society of the Carbonari. He was sent by the leaders of this body to Tuscany to plant the order there. Entrapped by an *agent provocateur*, Mazzini was arrested, the governor of Genoa informing his father that "he was a young man of talent, very fond of solitary walks at night, and habitually silent as to the subject of his meditations, and that the government was not fond of young men of talent, the subject of whose musings was unknown to it." Brutally separated from his father by the military, Mazzini was sent to the fortress of Savona, overlooking the sea on the Western Riviera. Here he remained for some time, the Bible, Tacitus, and Byron being the companions of his solitude. He was acquitted by a committee of senators at Turin; but not before he had conceived in his solitary cell the design of a new association of Young Italy—a society of young men bound together by a common faith and zeal—for the emancipation of the country. A journey to Switzerland and France followed; and at Marseilles, whither great numbers of Italian exiles had

flocked, Mazzini sketched out the design and rules of the new society. About this very time (April 1831) Charles Albert, who had been numbered in the ranks of the Carbonari, ascended the Sardinian throne, and many believed that he would achieve the liberty and unity of Italy. Mazzini did not share these views. He did, indeed, in a memorable letter, urge the Sardinian King to put himself at the head of the movement for Italian independence, telling him that he had the choice of being judged by posterity as the greatest of men or the last of Italian tyrants. But no man ever believed so firmly in the divine right of the Republic as did Mazzini. The salvation of Italy, he held, could never be achieved by any monarch, but only through the republican association of the Italian people. Even in 1861 he writes: "All that the Piedmontese monarchy can give us—even if it can give so much—will be an Italy shorn of provinces which ever were, are, and will be, Italian, though yielded up to foreign domination in payment of the services rendered; an Italy, the abject slave of French policy, dishonoured by her alliance with despotism; weak, corrupted, and disinherited of all moral mission, and bearing within her the germs of provincial autonomy and civil war." Italian provinces are indeed held by France and by Austria to-day, nor is Italy yet free from tendencies to separatism; while her present statesmen appear to be more concerned in the making of guns and ironclads and the acquisition of territory in Africa than in carrying out any "moral mission." But it must be admitted that, so far as appears (and this is the judgment of so competent an observer as M. de Laveleye), there is no very marked feeling for the Republic beloved by Mazzini; while in Italy, as in every other country, the social question at present eclipses the purely political.

Mazzini's republican ideal was, however, no mere political mechanism, but an organic union, the life of which was a religious faith. Mazzini found Italy utilitarian and materialist, permeated by French ideas, and weakened by her reliance on French initiative. He was filled with hope that Italy might not only achieve her own unity, but might once more accomplish, as she had in the Rome of the Cæsars and the Rome of the Church,

the unity of the Western world. "On my side I believed," he says, "that the great problem of the day was a religious problem, to which all other questions were but secondary." The Italians were to be convinced that their "sole path to victory was through sacrifice—constancy in sacrifice." Instead, therefore, of the old wire-pulling mechanism of Carbonarism, we have, as the exponent of these ideas, the association of Young Italy, filled with the breath of the new life. In the general instructions for the members of Young Italy Mazzini gives the reasons for his republican creed. Young Italy is republican, he says, because every nation should form a free and equal community of brothers; because all true sovereignty resides in the nation; because privilege tends to undermine the equality of the citizens, and therefore to endanger the liberty of the country; because the Republic closes the path, otherwise open, to usurpation; because monarchy involves the intermediate element of an aristocracy, which is a source of inequality and corruption; because monarchy, which cannot now be based on the extinct belief of divine right, has become too weak a bond of unity and authority; because there are no monarchical elements in Italy; because Italian tradition is essentially republican; because monarchy would drag Italy into concessions to foreign courts, trust in and respect for diplomacy, and repression of the popular element; because the recent Italian movements had all been in essence republican; and because the idea of the Republic, dominating every European revolutionary manifestation, appealed to the sympathy and imagination of the Italian people.

Never existed greater devotion to a cause than was displayed by the leading members of Young Italy. "I never saw," said Mazzini, "any nucleus of young men so devoted, capable of such strong mutual affection, such pure enthusiasm, and such readiness in daily, hourly toil, as were those who then laboured with me. We were, Lamberti, Usiglio, Lustrini, G. B. Ruffini, and five or six others, almost all Modenese; alone, without any office, without subalterns, immersed in labour the whole of the day, and the greater part of the night; writing articles and

letters, seeing travellers, affiliating the Italian sailors, folding our printed articles, tying up bundles, alternating between intellectual labour and the routine of working men." Thus was the faith of the new Italian apostolate exemplified in its works. In the journal *Young Italy* appeared at the end of 1831 the manifesto of the new party, written by Mazzini himself. It was an eloquent appeal, written under the influence of the nascent romanticism of the time, fervid and passionate; too florid indeed for the taste of our colder and more critical period. Through it the regeneration of Italy was presented to the young Italian mind as an object of religious enthusiasm, to help forward which young Italy "has need of purification from every servile habit, from every unworthy affection." In order to differentiate the new movement from Carbonarism, which had been individualistic, founded on calculations of material interest, and given to compromise, it was now shown that Association was the new watchword. "Revolutions must be made by the people and for the people. This is our Word; it sums up our whole doctrine; it is our science, our religion, our heart's affection." No longer can any great human movement be based on a theory of individualism; the epoch of collective action has arrived, and the national organism must be penetrated with a conscious sense of its mission. This manifesto was followed by other writings from Mazzini, including "Thoughts Addressed to the Poets of the 19th Century," "On the Brotherhood of the Peoples," "The Alliance of the French and German Peoples," and "Young Italy to the People of Germany and the Liberals of France." In August 1832 Mazzini was decreed exiled from France. But it was easier to publish the decree than to enforce it. The spies who served a French prefect were willing to serve the outlaw also; and thus it came to pass that he sent to Geneva a friend who bore a close personal resemblance to himself, whilst he "walked quietly through the whole row of police-officers, dressed in the uniform of a national guard," and was able to remain a whole year in Marseilles, writing, correcting proofs, corresponding, and holding secret interviews. Thus was developed in Mazzini, under the educating

compulsion of threatened despotism, that "cat-like footfall," as a writer has called it, which "never betrayed him to Europe, while he passed untouched through her highways and byways as often as he listed, like the very wraith and spirit of Republicanism that he was."

The Association of Young Italy was soon to experience the fate reserved for those who raise the standard of insurrection against organised wrong. Mazzini himself had conceived the idea of a national revolution through the insurrection of the Sardinian States; Genoa and Alessandria being the two centres of the movement. But owing to the accident of a quarrel between two artillerymen the government was enabled to trace the secret of the conspiracy, and very soon wholesale arrests took place. Ferocious terrorism and artful designs were resorted to by the government. Some of the prisoners were made to believe, by forged signatures, that their own friends had denounced them. In other cases a pretended conspirator was placed in the same cell with a prisoner to worm his secret from him. An infusion was mixed with the drinking water of some prisoners to weaken the intellectual faculties. Beneath the window of a prisoner's cell the public crier would announce the execution of his friend. Mazzini's dearest friend, Jacopo Ruffini, whom he describes as "a youth of the sweetest nature, the purest and most constant affections I have ever known," tore one night a nail from the door of his prison, and opened a vein in his neck. "With this last protest against tyranny, he took refuge in the bosom of his Creator." Ultimately several were executed, others imprisoned for a term of years, while some managed to escape. Mazzini himself was among those condemned to death. Thus ended the first attempt of Young Italy.

But action was the motto of the insurgents, and a new attempt was shortly after determined on. Mazzini proceeded to Geneva, where he helped to set on foot a new journal, called *L' Europe Centrale*, and where he determined to operate on Savoy. Into the history of the abortive expedition there it is impossible, for reasons of space, to enter. Suffice it to say that, contrary to

Mazzini's advice, the expedition was placed under the direction of General Ramorino, who had been sent to Warsaw during the Polish insurrection by the Parisian Committee of the Friends of Poland. Delay ensued, want of confidence, exhaustion of funds, and finally betrayal by Ramorino. "The first period of Young Italy was concluded, and concluded with a defeat." The Italian exiles were dealt severely with by the governments under whose jurisdiction they were; others escaped, many going to Switzerland. Mazzini and three of his friends lay concealed for some time in Lausanne, but ultimately took up their abode in Berne, sad, poverty-stricken, exiled from friends and home, but devoted to a great ideal. "They were the infants of a new world, the children of a new faith. . . . They saw nations regenerated, and races long divided advancing together in brotherhood, confidence, and joy, while the Angel of Liberty, Equality, and Humanity spread his white wings above them." On the 15th April 1834, eighteen of the Berne exiles, Poles, Italians, and Germans, constituted a pact of fraternity, and founded the association of Young Europe, the mission of which was declared to be the constitution of mankind in such a manner "as to enable it through a continuous progress to discover and apply the law of God by which it should be governed, as speedily as possible." No true association, it is declared, is possible save among free men and equals; therefore the union of republican nationalities is the thing to be striven for. "All privilege is a violation of equality. All arbitrary rule is a violation of liberty. Every act of egotism is a violation of fraternity." Towards the end of the same year Mazzini founded the association of Young Switzerland, and in June 1835 a journal for extending its ideas, entitled *La Jeune Suisse*. But the European governments were keeping close watch over the exiles in Switzerland, and in July 1836 one Auguste Conseil was despatched by the French government to Berne to obtain their confidence, discover their secrets, and then of course betray them. The Swiss government was weak and timid; and when, in September 1836, France suspended diplomatic relations with Switzerland, the Swiss authorities yielded, and Mazzini was condemned to

perpetual exile from the Swiss Republic. He shrugged his shoulders, he says, and remained till December, searched for in vain on every side ; but then, owing to the state of health of the two friends who shared his trials, he left, and in January 1837 came to London. The "hell of exile" was never so dreary to Mazzini as during his first few months in the English capital. He was in a condition of the deepest poverty. "I struggled on," he says, "in silence. I pledged, without the possibility of redeeming them, the few dear souvenirs, either of my mother or others, which I possessed ; then things of less value ; until one Saturday I found myself obliged to carry an old coat and a pair of boots to one of the pawnbroker's shops, crowded on Saturday evenings by the poor and fallen, in order to obtain food for the Sunday. After this some of my fellow-countrymen became security for me, and I dragged myself from one to another of those loan societies which drain the poor man of the last drop of blood, and often rob him of the last remnant of shame and dignity, by exacting from him forty or fifty per cent. upon a few pounds, which he is compelled to pay back in weekly payments, at certain fixed hours, in offices held in public houses, or gin and beer shops, among crowds of the drunken and dissolute." But besides this terrible physical distress, Mazzini's soul was haunted at this time by the spectre of an awful doubt. Had he done right in leading others to sacrifice their fortunes and their lives for an Idea? "I felt myself a criminal—conscious of guilt, yet incapable of expiation. The forms of those shot at Alessandria and Chambery rose up before me like the phantoms of a crime and its unvailing remorse. I could not recall them to life. How many mothers I had caused to weep! How many more must learn to weep, should I persist in the attempt to arouse the youth of Italy to noble action, to awaken in them the yearning for a common country! And if that country were indeed an illusion!" Had this terrible state of mind lasted much longer, Mazzini tells us he must either have gone mad or died the death of a suicide. But he examined himself, and assured his mind of the purity of its purpose. He examined his cause, and satisfied himself that it was just. And so he

recovered his mental balance and serenity of soul. "Life," he proclaims, "is a mission. Every other definition of life is false, and leads all who accept it astray." When we clearly perceive that our action is in accord with the highest commands, and is dedicated to universal aims, the inevitable strife—the "bridal dawn of thunder-peals wherever thought hath wedded fact"—does not disturb our inward calm. We are the soldiers of an Idea, and that is the warrant of our action. "Think ye I am come to bring peace on the earth? I am not come to bring peace, but a sword." Mazzini, therefore, perceiving the purpose of our life, and conscious of the grandeur and unselfishness of his aims, found peace, and the black clouds of doubt fled away.

Supporting himself by his pen, and devoting no small part of his time and energies to the help and education of his poor and unhappy fellow-countrymen in London, Mazzini toiled on, noting every European movement, and with his mind fixed permanently on the Italian problem. It was during this time that several of his most important essays were produced—those on Lamennais and on Byron and Goethe in 1839, the two on Carlyle in 1843, and that on the minor works of Dante in 1844. The two essays on Carlyle—one on the "Genius and Tendency of the Writings of Thomas Carlyle," and the other on Carlyle's "French Revolution"—are of especial value, and contain criticism marked by deep insight as well as strong sympathy. All that Carlyle combats, says Mazzini, "is indeed really false, and has never been combated more energetically; that which he teaches is not always true. His aspirations belong to the future—the temper and habits of his intelligence attach him to the past. My sympathies may claim the one-half of the man,—the other half escapes me." The chief source of Carlyle's weakness is discerned in his individualism. With Carlyle the single soul bows prostrate before the Supreme Power, with whom it can enter into no relations and in whose sight it is nothing. The collective life of mankind is ignored, and the majority of men are despised. Hence arise hero-worships, strong rulers, and "saviours of society." Carlyle is a veritable John the Baptist, calling from the wilderness of modern life on the individual to

repent, and to do "the task that lies nearest to him." That is a great and needful mission, as Mazzini admitted; and how nobly Carlyle discharged that mission we all know. But it is not the highest mission for our age. We cannot relate ourselves to the Divine, says Mazzini, but through collective humanity. It is not by isolated duty (which indeed the conditions of modern life render more and more impossible), nor by contemplation of mere Power as displayed in the material world, that we can develop our nature. It is rather by mingling with the universal life, and by carrying on the evolution of the never-ending work. "Annihilate the connecting-link between all human lives; efface the infallibility involved in the idea of progression, of collective mankind, and what is martyrdom but a suicide without an object? . . . Sadness, unending sadness, discordance between the will and the power, disenchantment, discouragement,—such is human life, when looked at only from the individual point of view." "Mr. Carlyle comprehends only the *individual;* the true sense of the unity of the human race escapes him. He sympathises with all men, but it is with the separate life of each, and not with their collective life." Thus it is that Carlyle, spite of his great powers, his noble genius, and his fruitful thoughts, cannot be, in any high sense, the prophet of democracy; for no man, however great, can be the inspirer of an epoch whose ruling idea he does not comprehend.

This powerful criticism dealt with the work of one who was no stranger to Mazzini. The two men had met, and, spite of differences, had learned to know each other's worth. When the English government stooped to act the part of spy and informer for Austria by opening Mazzini's letters, and by traducing, through the mouth of one of its leading men, Mazzini's character, Carlyle testified in a letter to the *Times* (June 15, 1844) his regard for the persecuted Italian exile—"I have had the honour to know M. Mazzini for a series of years, and, whatever I may think of his practical insight and skill in worldly affairs, I can with great freedom testify to all men that he, if ever I have seen one such, is a man of genius and virtue, a man of sterling veracity, humanity, and nobleness of mind, one of those

rare men, numerable, unfortunately, but as units in this world, who are worthy to be called martyr souls; who, in silence, piously in their daily life, understand and practise what is meant by that." The falsehoods of Lord Aberdeen and the calumnies (afterwards apologised for) of Sir James Graham did not increase Mazzini's respect for the English government, which he regarded as "founded on the absurd privilege of hereditary power, and maintained by such empty formulæ as, The head of the state reigns, but does not govern." Such fictions he regarded as bearing a "radical vice of artificiality or immorality," and as leading to a constant state of antagonism between "a small and privileged fraction of society" and the great body of the people. But while disliking the government, Mazzini had a great regard for the English people, among whom he found many dear friends and co-workers in the great cause he had so deeply at heart.

Meanwhile the Italian movement was passing into the hands of parties and sects with which Mazzini had no sympathy. Compromise, materialism, and an almost superstitious belief in the French initiative—all three particularly abhorrent to Mazzini—had produced a great party of so-called Moderates, who put their faith in diplomacy, and some of whom trusted in Pius IX.—a confidence which was soon to be rudely shaken, though it may well be believed that that pontiff started with a fair stock of good intentions. But the year of revolutions—1848—arrived; and with it arrived insurrection in Italy. The sword was unsheathed by the people in Sicily and in Venetian-Lombardy, and a war committee sat at Milan. Mazzini's idea was that an insurrectional government should be established, which should unite the Venetian and Lombard elements, and thus form the nucleus of a United Italy. With this hope he hastened to his native land, speaking first at Brescia, and then proceeding to Milan. Manin held Venice, and Mazzini advised that Italy should rally round the Venetian flag. But again failure ensued, and the republican movement in Lombardy collapsed; no work was left there for Mazzini, who went by way of France to Tuscany. In the meantime the Pope

had fled from Rome, which had thus become a free city. Mazzini determined to proceed thither, and in "the city of the soul" to establish the Republic, which was duly proclaimed on the 9th of February 1849. A provisional government had been appointed, which for two months had conducted the administration. This body appealed to universal suffrage to elect a Constituent Assembly of one hundred and fifty members, which, on the date mentioned, declared the secular Papacy abolished and the Republic established. "Rome," says Mazzini, "was the dream of my young years; the generating idea of my mental conception; the keystone of my intellectual edifice, the religion of my soul; and I entered the city one evening, early in March, with a deep sense of awe, almost of worship. Rome was to me, as in spite of her present degradation she still is, the temple of Humanity." On the 18th of March a committee of war was chosen by the Assembly, on the proposition of Mazzini; an army of 45,000 was planned, and it was determined to send 10,000 men to aid Piedmont. But after the battle of Novara, by which the Piedmontese monarchy consented to what Mazzini designated her "sin and shame," a triumvirate was formed in Rome; Mazzini, Aurelio Saffi, and Armellini being the triumvirs. The brief history of the glorious Roman Republic and its cruel destruction at the hands of a sister republic are well known. On the 25th of April the French troops landed at Civita Vecchia, and the citizens decided to defend their cause, and, if needful, to die for it. The invasion of Rome was, as Mazzini says, the design of Louis Napoleon, who was meditating his tyranny at home, was desirous of gaining the support of the Church, and of accustoming the soldiery to fire on the republican flag. On May 7th the French Assembly desired the French government to empower M. Lesseps, their envoy, to come to terms with the Roman Republic. A treaty was made towards the end of May, by which an alliance was established between the Republic and France, by which the French army was to defend Rome in case of invasion. But this treaty the French general Oudinot refused to recognise, the French made themselves masters

of the heights round the city, and the siege began which ended with the overthrow of the Republic and the entry of the French troops into the city. Mazzini was the life and soul of the defence: surrounded by the wounded and the dying, his one fixed idea was the preservation of an unstained flag, the Roman banner on which was inscribed "God and the People," which might become the flag of a regenerated and united country under the lead of Rome. But he came forth from the siege an old and broken man so far as his bodily powers were concerned. Margaret Fuller, whose noble efforts for the wounded during the siege gained for her Mazzini's affectionate regard, thus describes him as he then appeared:—"Mazzini had suffered millions more than I could; he had borne his fearful responsibility; he had let his dearest friends perish; he had passed all these nights without sleep; in two short months he had grown old; all the vital juices seemed exhausted; his eyes were all bloodshot; his skin orange; flesh he had none; his hair was mixed with white; his hand was painful to the touch; but he had never flinched, never quailed; had protested in the last hour against surrender: sweet and calm, but full of a more fiery purpose than ever; in him I revered the hero, and owned myself not of that mould."

The Republic had fallen, the Vicar of Christ returned to Rome under the protection of French bayonets, and Mazzini went to Switzerland, and afterwards to England. The more active part of his life was over, though he personally assisted in the abortive insurrection of 1857, and strongly opposed the alliance of the Sardinians with the French Emperor in 1859. This was the work of the diplomatic Cavour, and Mazzini did not believe in the salvation of Italy through diplomacy. We know, as a matter of fact, that Italy paid, as the price of this alliance, Savoy and Nice. United Italy, as Mazzini understood it, does not yet exist; in its place there is a truncated Italy of monarchy and diplomacy, the creation of Victor Emmanuel, Louis Napoleon, and Cavour. Still, that is better than the "geographical expression" of Metternich; for the Italian has now a country, he has dignity and substantial political freedom.

But he has also, alas, at the same time, huge armaments and terrible poverty. The unity of Italy under a king of the house of Savoy was largely aided by Garibaldi. He had, assisted by Mazzini, carried to a successful issue the insurrection in Sicily, and had become dictator of Central Italy. While Mazzini was urging an advance on Rome, and a movement against Austria in Venice, Garibaldi, on the other hand, transferred his conquests to Victor Emmanuel, whose monarchy was thus consolidated. The union of Rome with Italy was delayed until the fall of the French Empire. On the 20th September 1870 the Italian troops entered the city, and the temporal power of the Papacy ended.

During this period Mazzini watched carefully all the political and social phenomena, and produced some of his most important writings. An essay on "Europe: its Condition and Prospects," appeared in the *Westminster Review* in 1852, and the greater part of "The Duties of Man" in 1858. The "Thoughts upon Democracy in Europe" had appeared in 1847 in the *People's Journal*. Since two cheap and convenient editions of these latter essays have been given to the public within the last few years, they are not included in the present volume, although they contain perhaps the most important and characteristic utterances of Mazzini's thought. In all these essays Mazzini gives to his readers his root ideas. Society conceived as a whole, the thought of collective mankind, composed of free nationalities, life conceived as a mission, duty regarded as the fulfilment of a divine law and as being precedent to individual rights, the union of thought and action, faith shown through works, conscience and tradition the *criteria* of truth—these are the main ideas herein taught.

No portion of Mazzini's teaching is more important than his criticism of the ideas summed up in the French Revolution. Mazzini regarded that event as the close, not the opening, of an epoch—the epoch of individual rights, which, after a period of chaos, was to be succeeded by the epoch of association, of collective life. The Revolution finally conquered for man those rights of the individual contended for by the Protestant

Reformation, but it necessarily ends, according to Mazzini, in despotism. "When Napoleon, the most powerful *individual* of that period, arose, and, relying upon force, said *Yield*—the revolution gave way before him, and with the exception of a very few, all these men who had sworn to die, or live free, held their tongues, and giving in, sat upon the benches of the conservative senate, or upon the benches of the Institute." Has, then, this individualism done no good work? Yes; it is powerful to destroy, and it has burnt up shams and lies not a few. But Mazzini contends that it cannot create; the new birth can only proceed from the collective life. With Association goes Duty. The individual has hitherto struggled for his rights; he will now co-operate with his nation in the fulfilment of its mission, with the world in its development of the eternal law of progress. This law is regarded as the unfolding of the Divine will in which, as Mazzini's countryman Dante said, is man's peace. "The absence of a highest form of *Duty*, universally accepted, to which every one can appeal, little by little and imperceptibly accustoms people's minds to submission to accomplished *facts:* success becomes the sign of right, and *what is done* takes the place, in men's worship, of Truth." From this it may be seen that Mazzini is wholly opposed to the doctrine that man acts from mere considerations of self-interest. This doctrine, assumed by most economists and politicians as self-evident, but which is visibly losing its hold under the influence of moral teachers like Ruskin, is condemned by Mazzini as resulting in the despotism of authority when starting from the *collective* point of view, and "in the anarchy of animal propensities" when adopted from the *individual* point of view. In no case can it afford a foundation for any true society. "No, certainly," he writes, "it was not to attain the ignoble and immoral *every one for himself* that so many great men, holy martyrs of thought, have shed, from epoch to epoch, from century to century, the tears of the soul, the sweat and blood of the body. Beings of devotedness and love, they laboured and suffered for something higher than the individual; for that Humanity which ought to be the object of all our efforts, and to which we are all

responsible. Before a generation which scorned or persecuted them, they calmly uttered their prophetic thoughts, with an eye fixed on the horizon of future times ; speaking to that *collective* being which ever lives, which ever learns, and in which the divine idea is progressively realised ; for that city of the human race, which alone, by the association of all intellects, of all loves, and of all forces, can accomplish the providential design that presided over our creation here below."

Mazzini's lofty idealism, his religious spirit, and his constant insistence on duty rather than on rights, frequently brought him into antagonism with many of the revolutionists of Europe, who, while they applauded his struggle for Italy, were by no means animated by the same motives which controlled him. Foremost among these was the famous Russian anarchist, Bakounine who, from an atheistic standpoint, criticised severely the theological politics of Mazzini. Yet Bakounine, while opposing the thinker, admired the man. "If there is a man," he says in his pamphlet (written in 1871) "La Théologie politique de Mazzini et l'Internationale," "universally respected in Europe, and who, during forty years of activity, uniquely devoted to the service of a great cause, has really merited this respect, it is Mazzini. He is incontestably one of the noblest and purest individualities of our age." Bakounine, like Mazzini, believed in association, but his conception of solidarity was very different from that of Mazzini. "The human species," says this Russian thinker, "like all other animal species, has inherent principles which are peculiarly its own, and all these principles sum themselves up, or reduce themselves, to a single principle which we call solidarity." This is a frank statement of the naturalistic view of man, who is thus regarded as one term of a series of phenomena, and whose desire for union is nothing more than a superior form of the gregarious instinct. This is very different from Mazzini's spiritual union, "his city of the human race," outside time and space.

Equally decisive was Mazzini's opposition to the older French Communism as preached by Proudhon, Fourier, and Enfantin. These doctrines were based, according to Mazzini, on the old

and false notions of the rights and the personal gratification of the desires of the Ego ; and if carried into practice, would lead either to despotism or anarchy. His attitude towards our current socialism would probably be somewhat different, for that is historical, and is connected with those democratic forms which he thought essential, and which were ignored by the older French Communists. Many Socialists appear to regard Mazzini as mainly interested in the mere political as distinguished from the social question. But this is hardly borne out by his writings, which contain a powerful diagnosis of the present social conditions. Thus he writes—"And as it is impossible to dream of the moral and intellectual progress of the people without providing for its physical amelioration—as it is absurd to say '*Instruct yourself*,' to a man who is working for his daily bread from fourteen to sixteen hours a-day, or to tell him to *love* who sees nothing around him but the cold calculations of the speculator and the tyranny of the capitalist legislator —the social question was found inevitably grafted upon the question of political progress. Henceforward they could only be separated by destroying both." And again in the "Duties of Man"—"At the present day—and this is the curse of our actual social economy—capital is the tyrant of labour." His economical ideal is thus defined—"Association—but to be administered with a truly republican fraternity by your own delegates, and from which you should be free to withdraw at your own discretion." There is no fundamental divergence between this teaching and that of the present day advocates of Socialism. But it may be admitted that Mazzini was not a great economist ; and that his revolt against the present conditions of labour was rather of the heart than of the head, and that he did not fully perceive how those very conditions force on a class struggle even in republican communities like the United States. But if he did not fully grasp the economical problem, at least Mazzini did not pretend, like so many, that that problem is to be solved by the preaching of morality. No doubt the problem of society is fundamentally a moral one ; but then morality is not a metaphysical entity existing outside the real world. It is the

expression of a harmonious condition of the individual and society in the actual world. And the charge brought against present economic arrangements is two-fold :—First, that they violate justice by depriving a portion of society of the full result of its labour ; and second, that the physical and social conditions under which that portion lives prevent its members from properly developing their faculties, *i.e.*, prevent them from living a truly moral life. If these charges can be sustained, it is evident that the economic problem cannot possibly be separated from the moral problem. And this was undoubtedly Mazzini's view. His objection to a good deal of the Socialist teaching was, that it regarded the social problem as a *merely* economical question ; whereas it is truly a human problem of which the economical question is only one factor, however important that factor may be. He thus states the problem in his essay on "The War and the Commune"—"The immediate aim of humanity is the harmonious development of all its faculties and forces towards the discovery and fulfilment of the moral law." The fulfilment of that law obviously involves justice in the economic relations of society ; and just as obviously does it involve conditions favourable to the growth of every man's moral nature. For men cannot develop their characters in the air, but only in the real world of family life, of property, and of institutions.

The latter years of Mazzini's life were spent in London, where he had now many friends. His health was broken and his body weak. "Physically," says Mr. Garrison the American Abolitionist, who visited him in 1867, "he was greatly attenuated, stricken in countenance, broken in health, and evidently near the close of his earthly pilgrimage." But his mind was active as ever, his spirit resolute and strong. "In private society," says Professor Masson, "Mazzini's habits were simple, kindly, affectionate, and sometimes even playful. He had a good deal of humour, and could tell a story or hit off a character very shrewdly and graphically, not omitting the grotesque points." He was ready to talk under favourable circumstances, and his talk "on such occasions was good, utterly unpedantic, about

this or that, as it happened, and often with whim and laughter." But if some topic was started on which he had a serious opinion, "he would fight for it, insist upon it, make a little uproar about it, abuse you with mock earnestness for believing the contrary. That would not last long ; a laugh would end it ; we knew Mazzini's way." His last two London residences were in the Fulham Road, and at 2 Onslow Terrace, Brompton, the latter being nearly opposite the spot where Ledru-Rollin lived during his exile in London. His rooms were filled with books and papers, and the birds he always loved to have with him flew about the room as he talked.

Respecting the Franco-German war and the events of the Commune Mazzini gave his opinions in an article contributed to the *Contemporary Review* in 1871. He could not join in the condemnation of Germany, nor did he believe with Garibaldi that the proclamation of the Republic in Paris made any essential difference in the state of affairs, though he was glad to witness the downfall of the Empire. The French Republic, he truly says, "was not the issue of the spontaneous, deliberate vote of a people arising, in the name of eternal duty, to assert their freedom. . . . It was a mere *de facto* consequence of the state of things—of Louis Napoleon's cowardly abdication of his leadership, and of the absence of all other government." Soon after this Mazzini left for Italy, and went to Pisa, where he lived under the name of Giorgio Rosselli Brown. The mild climate of that city might, he thought, restore his shattered health. But in February of the following year he was taken with terrible spasms of the throat, which lasted five days. Then came a brief interlude of relief from pain, but on the 6th March he felt an oppression in his chest, and it was found next day that his right lung was congested. On the 9th his voice left him ; and on the 10th March 1872, while endeavouring to speak to his physician, he fell back dead in his bed. The funeral honours paid to him were national, a vast procession of eighty thousand mourners following him to the grave. His mortal remains repose in a massive granite vault on one of the highest terraces in the Campo Santo of Genoa, the city of his birth.

Victor Emmanuel, Cavour, and Garibaldi have been designated, along with Mazzini, as the founders of modern Italy. But a broad line of demarcation divides Mazzini from the others. Neither the end aimed at nor the means adopted by such a wily diplomatist as Cavour could approve themselves to the pure soul of Mazzini. With no monarch of the house of Savoy could Mazzini hold any terms; and even Garibaldi he regarded as one who had played false to the Republican ideal. There has been much disputation as to the questions at issue between the Mazzinians and the supporters of the Italian *status quo;* a good deal of it unprofitable. For the most part it ultimately resolves itself into the everlasting conflict between the idealist and the man of the world. The former stands by the intellect and the conscience; the latter by the limitations of actual fact and the practical difficulties of the case. Men like Cavour are merely politicians—bold, skilful, subtle, ingenious, ready to adapt themselves to the exigencies of the moment, and to use any instrument for effecting their object. But to the mind of Mazzini this Machiavellian adroitness and utilitarian compromise was odious; for Mazzini was above all things a religious man who held that the political question could not be separated from the religious. "The Republican party," he tells us, "is not a political party; it is essentially a religious party." What common ground is there between this religious idealist on the one hand and the mere soldier or the mere diplomatist on the other? The latter have founded an Italian state of monarchy, of diplomacy, of armaments: Mazzini aimed at founding a religious commonwealth. The aims being so essentially different, argument as to methods seems useless. Mazzini's work was of a wholly different kind from that of the king, the statesman, and the soldier. They were intent on the outer framework; he on the inner life. They were willing to bend before established fact; he refused to do so. They have endowed the erewhile "geographical expression" with an outward form, as to the permanence of which few would care to prophesy. It was pre-eminently Mazzini who gave to Italy the breath of a new life, who taught her people constancy in

A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITINGS OF MAZZINI, ARRANGED IN THE ORDER OF THEIR PUBLICATION.

1829. Of an European Literature.
1830. On the Historical Drama.
1830. On Fatality considered as an Element of the Dramatic Art.
1833. The Philosophy of Music.
1835. Faith and the Future.
1837. On Italian Literature since 1830.
1838. On Paul Sarpi.
1838. On the Poems of Victor Hugo.
1839. Lamennais.
1839. George Sand.
1839. Byron and Goethe.
1839. The Poems of Lamartine.
1843. On the Genius and Tendency of the Writings of Carlyle.
1843. On Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution.*
1844. On the Minor Works of Dante.
1844. Italy, Austria, and the Pope (Letter to Sir J. Graham).
1844. Duties of Man (first part).
1847. Thoughts upon Democracy in Europe.
1849. The Holy Alliance of the Peoples.
1850. From the Pope to the Council.
1850. On the Encyclica of Pius IX.
1850. Royalty and Republicanism in Italy.
1852. Europe: Its Condition and Prospects.
1855. Two Letters on the Crimean War.
1856. On the Theory of the Dagger.
1858. Duties of Man (second part).
1858. Letter to Louis Napoleon.
1861. The Italian Question and the Republicans.
1865. Address to Pius IX. on his Encyclical.
1871. The War and the Commune.
1872. The Italian School of Republicanism.
1874. M. Renan and France.

ESSAYS.

FAITH AND THE FUTURE.

THE following little work, written in 1835, was a portion of that European Republican Apostolate I endeavoured to substitute for the French Apostolate, which was impeded and almost crushed beneath the repressive laws of the monarchy of July. Its object was to insist upon the necessity of investing that European Republican Apostolate with a religious character.

It was published by our printing establishment at Bienne, and was sequestrated at the French frontier. Its circulation was therefore limited to Switzerland, and it remained unknown in Italy except to very few. It was reprinted at Paris in 1850 in French, in which language it was originally written, and at the request of the publisher I then added to it the following Preface.

PREFACE.

London, *August* 1850.

The pages now republished were written as far back as 1835, and on re-reading them I observe, with profound sorrow, that I might re-write them even now.

Issued but a few days after the promulgation of the law of the 9th of September, against the republican press, this work had scarcely any publicity. Fifteen years have passed since then, and yet it does not contain a single page which is not applicable to the present state of things.

Europe has been shaken to its foundations, agitated by twenty revolutions. France has proclaimed the falsehood of the ultimate formula of monarchy—*la monarchie bourgeoise.* Germany—calm philosophic Germany—has had ten centres of revolution upon her soil. The roar of the popular lion has been heard at Vienna: the emperor has fled; the pope has fled. The revolutionary lava has poured along, from Milan to Pesth, from Venice to Berlin, from Rome to Posen. The banner inscribed with the device *Liberty, Independence, Right,* has floated over two-thirds of Europe. All is at an end. The blood of our heroes and the tears of our mothers have but watered the cross of the martyr. Victory has forsaken our camp, and our war-cry

now is, of a fatal necessity, the war-cry of fifteen years since. We are condemned to repeat the cry of 1835. There must be some deep-seated cause for this; a cause inherent in the very constitution of our party.

We are superior to our adversaries in courage, in devotion, and in knowledge of the wants of the people. Wheresoever we have found ourselves one to one—one people against one government—we have been victorious. And we have not abused our victory. At our first uprising we overthrew the scaffold. Our hands are pure. We carried nothing into exile save our unstained conscience, and our faith.

Why, then, has *reaction* triumphed?

Yes; the cause is in ourselves; in our want of organisation, in the dismemberment occasioned in our ranks by *systems*, some absurd and dangerous, all imperfect and immature, and yet defended in a spirit of fierce and exclusive intolerance; in our ceaseless distrust, in our miserable little vanities, in our absolute want of that spirit of discipline and order which alone can achieve great results; in the scattering and dispersing of our forces in a multitude of small centres and sects, powerful to dissolve, impotent to found.

The cause is in the gradual substitution of the worship of material interests, for the adoration of holy ideas; for the grand problem of education, which alone can legitimatise our efforts; for the true conceptions of *life* and its mission. It is in our having forgotten God; forgotten his law of love, of sacrifice, and of moral progress, and the solemn

tradition of humanity, for a theory of *well being*, the catechism of Volney, the egotistical principle of Bentham; it is in our indifference to truths of an order superior to this world, which alone are able to transform it. It is in the narrow spirit of *Nationalism* substituted for the spirit of Nationality; in the stupid presumption on the part of each people that they are capable of solving the political, social, and economical problem alone; in their forgetfulness of the great truths that the cause of the peoples is one; that the cause of the Fatherland must lean upon Humanity; that revolutions, when they are not avowedly a form of the worship of sacrifice for the sake of those who struggle and suffer, are doomed to consume themselves in a circle, and fail; and that the aim of our warfare, the sole force that can prevail over the league of these powers, the issue of privilege and interest, is the Holy Alliance of the Nations. The manifesto of Lamartine destroyed the French Revolution of 1848, as the language of narrow nationalism held at Frankfort destroyed the German Revolution; as the fatal idea of the aggrandisement of the House of Savoy destroyed the Italian Revolution.

It is now more than ever urgent to combat these tendencies—such is the purpose of the following pages. The evil is in ourselves. We must overcome it, or perish. It is necessary that the truth should be made manifest, even where it tells against ourselves. Those who would lead us astray may be irritated by it, but the good sense of the people will profit by it.

As to our enemies, their fate depends upon the success of

our labours. We are journeying beneath the storm-cloud, but the sun of God is beyond, bright and eternal. They may veil it from our eyes for a time—cancel it from the heavens they cannot. Europe—God be thanked—is emancipated since Marathon. On that day the *stationary* principle of the East was vanquished for ever: our soil received the baptism of liberty: Europe moved onward. She advances still; nor will a few paltry shreds of princely or diplomatic paper suffice to arrest her on her way.

FAITH AND THE FUTURE.

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. . . They who preach patience to the peoples as the sole remedy for the ills by which they are oppressed, or who, while they admit the necessity of a contest, would yet leave the initiative to be taken by their rulers, do not, to my thinking, understand the state of things coming upon us. They mistake the character of the epoch, unconsciously betray the cause they seek to serve, and forget that the mission assigned to the nineteenth century is profoundly organic; a work of initiation and renovation only to be fulfilled in spontaneity, frankness, courage, and conscience.

It is not enough to precipitate a monarchy into a gulf; the gulf must be closed up, and a durable edifice erected on its site. Monarchies are quickly made and unmade. Napoleon crushed ten in his iron hand, yet monarchy itself lives to gaze upon his tomb with the smile of victory. Three strokes dealt by the people in 1830 destroyed a monarchy eight centuries old; yet we are the proscribed of a new monarchy arisen upon its ruins.

It is well to remember this.

The *fifteen years' farce (la Comédie de quinze ans)* was

admirably played in France. The astute, irreproachable Jesuitism of the actors well deserved the envy of monarchy itself. But what have been the results?

The fifteen years' farce destroyed the monarchy of the elder branch of the Bourbons; but it destroyed at the same time that frank, austere, revolutionary energy which had placed France at the head of European nations; it condemned the ruling power to a state of perennial terror, but it also doomed the most enlightened part of France to long years of immorality. It instilled hypocrisy into the souls of men; it substituted a spirit of calculation for enthusiasm; the arts of defence for the initiative power of genius; the brain for the heart. The manly, vigorous national idea paled beneath a multitude of puny incomplete conceptions; and apostasy was introduced into the political sphere.

The subtle, treacherous, deceitful warfare of the fifteen years' farce spread a stratum of corruption over French civilisation, the consequences of which yet endure. A second such would be fatal indeed, and it is important that we should reflect on this.

When the times are right for detaching ourselves from the present and advancing towards the future, all hesitation is fatal; it enervates and dissolves. Rapidity of movement is the secret of great victories.

When the consequences of a principle are exhausted, and the edifice which had rested upon it for centuries is threatened with ruin, it behoves us to shake the dust from our feet, and hasten elsewhere. Life is beyond, without. Within is the icy breath of the tomb; scepticism wanders amid the ruins, and egotism tracks its footsteps, followed by isolation and death.

And now the times *are* ripe. The consequences of the

principle of individuality, dominant over the past, are exhausted. Monarchy in its second restoration has lost all creative power; its existence is a wretched plagiarism. Show me a single important act, a single manifestation of European *life*, which is not the issue of the *social* principle, which has not sprung from the *people*, the monarch of the future. The old world is incapable of aught but *resistance;* the only force it has left is the force of inertia. The aristocracies of the present day are but dead forms, artificially put in motion from time to time by galvanic power. Monarchy is but the reflection, the shadow of a life that has been.

The future has called us since 1814. For two and twenty years have the people heard its voice, and yearned to advance. And shall we retrace our steps, shall we recommence a work that is completed, copy the past, and return to a state of infancy because monarchy is decrepit?

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Analysis can never regenerate the peoples. Analysis is potent to dissolve; impotent to create. Analysis will never lead us further than the theory of individuality, and the triumph of the individual principle could only lead us to a revolution of Protestantism and mere liberty. The Republic is quite other.

The Republic—as I understand it at least—is the enthronement of the principle of association, of which liberty is merely an element, a necessary antecedent. Association is synthesis; and synthesis is divine: it is the lever of the world; the only method of regeneration vouchsafed to the human family. Opposition is analysis; an instrument of mere criticism. It generates nothing; it destroys. When analysis has declared a principle extinct, it seats itself

beside the corpse, and moves not onward. Synthesis alone has power to thrust the corpse aside, and advance in search of new life.

Thus it was that the revolution of 1789—a revolution intimately protestant in character—ended by enthroning analysis, affirming the fraternity of individuals, and organising liberty. And thus it was that the revolution of 1830—a revolution entirely of opposition—revealed at the very outset its incapacity of reducing to action the *social* idea, of which it had a dim and distant perception. Opposition can do no more than lay bare the decay, sterility, and exhaustion of a principle. Beyond that it sees nought but the void. Now we can build up nothing upon the void. A republic cannot be founded upon a demonstration *per absurdum;* the proof direct is indispensable. A new dogma alone cannot save us.

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Two things are essential to the realisation of the progress we seek: the declaration of a principle and its incarnation in action.

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The tortures of slavery have been for the peoples an initiation in the worship of liberty. Their sufferings have been beyond expression: the energy of their arising will be beyond all expectation. Their sorrows were blessed. They learned a truth with every tear. Every year of martyrdom was a preparation for their complete redemption. They have drained the cup to its last dregs; naught remains but to dash it in pieces.

What, then, are we to do?

To preach, to combat, to act.*

The republican party has nothing to alter either in its language or bearing. Any change introduced from any mere idea of tactics would lower it into a political party. Now the republican party is not a political party; it is essentially a religious party. From the days of Spartacus downwards, it has had its dogma, its faith, its martyrs; and it ought to have the inviolability of dogma, the infallibility of faith, the power of sacrifice, and the cry of action of martyrs. Its forgetfulness of this duty, its imitation of monarchy or aristocracy, its substitutions

* I say to act; but in laying down this principle of action as our rule of conduct, I do not speak of action on any terms; of feverish, ill-considered, disorganised action. I speak of action as the principle, the programme, the banner; as that which ought to be alike the tendency and the avowed aim of our exertions. The rest is a question of time, with which it is unnecessary to occupy ourselves here. What we want is that a temporary necessity shall not be elevated into a permanent theory; that the peoples shall not be deluded into substituting an indefinite, uncertain, peacefully progressive force of things, for true revolutionary activity;—that men shall not persist in attributing to the irregular and coldly analytic work of opposition, the power of revelation belonging to the revolutionary synthesis. I repudiate systematic inertia—the silence that broods, the simulation that betrays; and invoke a frank, sincere declaration of our dogma and belief. Our cry is the cry of Ajax. We desire to combat in the light of day, beneath the ray of heaven. Is this puerile impatience? No, it is the complement of our doctrine, the baptism of our faith. The principle of action which we inscribe upon our banner is strictly allied to our belief in a new epoch. How can this epoch be initiated if not through the people, through action, which is the WORD of the people. Without this principle of action, which we make the guide and rule of our every effort, the movement would be one of reaction only, and as such productive of imperfect, extrinsic, and merely material changes in the *actual state of things*.

of negations for a positive belief—these are the things that have so often caused its overthrow. The idea, the religious thought, of which—even when unconsciously—it is the representation on earth, has often raised it up, gigantic in power, when we believed it crushed for ever.

We ought not to forget this. Political parties fall and die: religious parties never die until after they have achieved their victory; until their vital principle has attained its fullest development and become identified with the progress of civilisation and manners.

Then, and not before then, does God infuse into the heart of a people, or the brain of an individual strong in genius and in love, a new idea, vaster and more fruitful than the idea then expiring; the centre of faith is moved one degree onwards, and only they who rally round that centre constitute the party of the future.

The republican party has then nothing to fear as to the final result of its mission; nothing from those defeats of an hour which do not affect the main body of an army, and only tend to call back to the centre those troops whom the ardour of battle has scattered. The danger is elsewhere.

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You deceive yourselves, we are told. The peoples lack faith. The masses are dormant, inert. They have worn chains so long as to lose the habit of motion. You have to do with Helots, not with men. How can you drag them into the battle, or maintain them in the field? How often have we called them to arms to the cry of *people, liberty, vengeance!* They did but raise their heavy heads for an instant, to sink back into their former stupor. They have seen the funeral procession of our martyrs pass them by, and understood not that with them were entombed their

own rights, their own lives, their own salvation. They seek after gold, and are held in inertia by fear. Enthusiasm is extinct, and it is not easy to rekindle it. Now, without the help of the masses you cannot act; you may teach martyrdom, but not victory. Die, if you believe that your blood will sooner or later raise up a generation of avengers, but do not seek to drag into your destiny those who have neither your energy nor your hopes. Martyrdom can never become the religion of a whole party. It is useless to exhaust the forces which may one day be of service in unsuccessful efforts. Do not deceive yourselves as to your epoch. Resign yourselves to await in patience.

The question is momentous. It involves the future of the party.

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Yes, the peoples lack faith: not that individual faith which creates martyrs, but that *social* faith which is the parent of victory; the faith that arouses the multitudes; faith in their own destiny, in their own mission, and in the mission of the epoch: the faith that combats and prays; the faith that enlightens, and bids men advance fearlessly in the ways of God and Humanity, with the sword of the people in their hand, the religion of the people in their heart, and the future of the people in their soul.

But such faith as this—preached by the sole priest of the Epoch, Lamennais—and which we are all bound *nationally* to reduce to action—what is wanted to give it to us? Is it strength, or the consciousness of strength, that we need? Have we lost it through the recognition of our real powerlessness, or through opinions that are erroneous, and prejudices that may be removed? Would not one energetic act of will re-establish an equilibrium

between the oppressor and the oppressed? And suppose this to be so, have we striven to achieve it? Are our own tendencies, our own manifestations of the idea we seek to promote, such as to realise the aim? Are we, whom chance has placed at the head of the movement, or are the multitudes who do but follow lead, to blame for the actual state of inertia?

Look at Italy. Misfortune, suffering, protest, individual sacrifice, have reached their climax there. The cup is full. Oppression is everywhere, like the air we breathe, but rebellion also. Three separate states, twenty cities, two millions of men arise, and in one week overthrow their governments, and proclaim their own emancipation, without a single protest raised, or a single drop of blood shed. One attempt constantly succeeds another. Do these twenty-five millions of men lack strength? Italy in revolution would be strong enough to conquer three Austrias. Do they lack the inspiration of great traditions—the religion of memory—the past? The people still bow down in reverence before the relics of the grandeur that has been. Do they lack a mission? Only to Italy has it been vouchsafed twice to give the word of unity to Europe. Do they lack courage? Ask it of 1746, of the records of the Grand Armée, of the thrice holy martyrs who, during the last fourteen years, have died there silently, without glory, for an idea.

Look at Switzerland. Can any one deny the valour or the profound spirit of independence that distinguishes these sons of the Alps? Five centuries of struggle, of intrigues, and of civil and religious discord, have failed to soil the Swiss banner of 1308. Nevertheless, Switzerland, whose battle-cry would arouse Germany and Italy, though well aware how the monarchs of Europe would shrink

from the idea of an European war sought by the peoples, because conscious that the last battle of that war would be the Waterloo of Monarchy,—Switzerland continually submits to insult and stoops to dishonour at the present day, and bows her head to the paltriest note of an Austrian agent.

Remember 1813: the youth of Germany abandoning their universities to fight the battles of independence; the thrill that ran throughout the whole country at the cry of *nationality* and independence;—and tell me whether that people would not have arisen had their deputies, electors, writers, all the influential men who preferred the circumlocution of constitutional opposition, rallied round the banner of Hambach?

Remember Grochow, Waver, Ostrolenska; and tell me what would have been the condition of Russia, if instead of wasting precious time in imploring the protection of diplomacy for that Poland which diplomacy had been sacrificing for a century past,—the combatants had rapidly carried the action of the revolutionary principle to its natural centre, beyond the Bug; if a vaster conception of popular emancipation had called into action those races whose secret was revealed in 1848 by Bogdan Chielmicki,—if while enthusiasm reigned supreme and the enemy was stupefied by terror, while the multitudes of Lithuania, Ukrania, and Gallicia, were burning with the hope of liberty, the insurrectionary forces had pushed on into Lithuania.

I write it with the deepest conviction: there is scarcely a single people unable by dint of faith, sacrifice, and revolutionary logic, to burst their chains in the face of the monarchies of Europe united against them; not a single people who, in the holiness of an idea of love and the future,

and in the strength of a word inscribed upon their insurrectionary banner, might not initiate an European crusade; not a single people to whom the opportunity of doing so has not been offered since 1830.

But in Italy, in Germany, in Poland, in Switzerland, in France, everywhere indeed, the true original nature of the revolutionary movements has been altered by men, unfortunately influential, but grasping and ambitious; who have regarded the uprising of a people but as an opportunity for power or profit;—or by weak men, trembling at the difficulties and dangers of the enterprises, who have at the outset sacrificed the logic of insurrection to their own fears. Everywhere have false and pernicious doctrines caused the revolutions to deviate from their true aim; the idea of a caste has been substituted for the popular idea of the emancipation of all by all; the idea of foreign help has weakened or destroyed the national idea. Nowhere have the promoters, the leaders, the governments of the insurrections, determined to cast into the balance of the country's destiny, the entire sum of forces which might have been put in motion by sufficient energy of will; nowhere has the consciousness of a great mission, and faith in its fulfilment, a true comprehension of the age and of its ruling thought, governed the action of those who, by assuming the direction of events, had pledged themselves to humanity for their successful issue. The mission before them was a mission of giants, and to perform it they stooped down to earth. They had half defined the secret of the generations; they had heard the cry of the great human families striving to shake off the dust of the sepulchre, and to arise to new life; they were called upon to declare the Word of the people and of the peoples, without fear or reserve—and they did but stammer forth hesitating words of concessions,

of charters, of compacts between power and right, between the unjust and the just. Even as age in its decrepitude demands of art some element of fictitious life, so they sought from the policy of the past the *idea* of its imperfect and fugitive existence. They were bound—even though it were raised upon their own dead bodies—to elevate the banner of insurrection so high that all the peoples might read therein its promises of victory; and they dragged it through the mud of royalty, veiled it beneath protocols, or hung it idly up—an ensign of prostitution—over the doors of foreign *Chancelleries.* They put their trust in the promises of every minister, in the hopes held out by every ambassador, in everything save in the omnipotence of the people.

We have seen the leaders of revolution immersed in the study of the treaties of 1815, seeking therein the charter of Italian or Polish liberty: others, more culpable, proclaiming aloud the negation of Humanity, and the affirmation of egotism, by inscribing upon their banner a principle of *non-intervention* worthy of the middle ages: others, more guilty still, denying both their brothers and fatherland, and breaking the national unity at the very moment when it behoved them to initiate its triumph, when the foreigner was advancing to their gates, by declaring —*Bolognese! the cause of the Modenese is not our cause.*

In their anxiety to *legalise* their revolution they forgot that every insurrection must derive its legality from its *aim*, its legitimacy from victory, its means of *defence* from *offence*, and the pledge of its success from its extension. They forgot that the charter of a nation's liberties is an article of the charter of humanity, and that they alone deserve that charter who are ready to conquer or die for all humanity.

When the peoples saw the initiators of revolution turn pale before the enterprise, and either shrink from the necessity of action, or advance trembling or uncertain, without any definite purpose, without any programme, or any hope save in foreign aid, even they became timid and hesitating; or rather they felt that the hour was not yet come, and held back. In the face of revolutions betrayed at their very outset, the multitudes stood aloof; enthusiasm was crushed at its birth; faith disappeared.

* * *

FAITH disappeared: but what have we done, what do we even now to revive it? Shame and grief! Ever since that holy light of the peoples faded away, we have either wandered in the darkness, without bond, plan, or unity of design; or folded our arms like men in despair. Some of us, after uttering a long cry of grief, have renounced all earthly progress to murmur a hymn of resignation, a prayer like the prayer of the dying: others have rebelled against hope, and, smiling in bitterness, have proclaimed the reign of darkness by accepting scepticism, irony, and incredulity as things inevitable, and their blasphemy has been responded to by the corruption of those already degraded, and by the suicide of despair of the pure in heart. The literature of the present day oscillates between these two extremes. Others, remembering the light that had illumined their infancy, retraced their weary steps to the sanctuary they had abandoned, hoping to rekindle the flame; or, concentrating the mind in purely subjective contemplation, merged existence in the *Ego*, forgetting or denying the external world to bury themselves in the study of the individual. Such is our present philosophy.

Others, born to struggle, and urged on by a power of sacrifice which, wisely directed, might have wrought miracles—impelled by instincts sublime, but indefinite—seized the banner that floated over the graves of their fathers, and rushed onwards; but they separated before they had advanced many steps, and each of them tearing a fragment from the banner, endeavoured to make of it the standard of the entire army. Such is the history of our political life.

The reader must pardon my reiterating these plaints. They are my *delenda est Carthago.* My work is not a labour of authorship, but a sincere and earnest mission of apostolate. Such a mission does not admit of diplomacy. I am seeking the secret of the delay in our advance, which appears to me to be attributable to causes apart from the strength of the enemy; I am striving to put the question in such a manner as will enable us speedily to regain a lost initiative. I must either be silent or speak on the whole truth.

Now it seems to me that there are two principal causes for this delay; both of them dependent upon the party's deviation from the true path; both of them tending to the substitution of the worship of the past for the worship of the future.

The first is the error which has led us to regard as a programme of the future that which was in fact but a grand summing up of the past; a formula expressing the results of the labour and achievements of an entire epoch—to confound two distinct epochs and two distinct syntheses—and to narrow a mission of social renovation to the proportions of a mere work of deduction and development. It has led us to abandon the principle for the symbol, the God for the idol; to immobilise that *initiative* which is the cross of fire

transmitted by God from people to people; to destroy the legitimacy of nationality, which is the life of the peoples, their mission, and the means given them by which to achieve it; which marks out the part assigned to them by God in our common work and duty—the evolution of his thought, one and multiple, which is the soul of our existence here below.*

The second cause is the error which has led us to confound the principle with one of its manifestations; the

* I have sketched forth my ideas upon the French Revolution, considered as the last word of an expiring epoch, rather than the first word of the epoch initiated by the nineteenth century, in an article "On the Revolutionary Initiative," published in the *Révue Républicaine*, 1835. . . . . In reverting to the study of the past, my object is to seek, in the historical evolution of the successive terms of progress, for data indicating a new social *aim;* an European synthesis, which, by removing the initiative from the hands of one sole people superior to the rest, will inspire *all* with the activity wanting at the present day;—because I desire to see thought translated into action—the fatal circle broken, within which all present action is restricted, and a decisive battle fought between the two principles now striving for mastery in Europe.

But ought we—I have been asked—to forget facts in order to improvise, according to our wishes, a revolutionary force where none in reality exists? Can we cancel the past? Can we leave out of our calculations the late revolutions of Bologna and Modena?

Theoretically speaking, our religious and philosophical belief *does* elevate us to a height excluding all arguments deduced from those incidental facts. We are approaching one of those palingenetic moments which introduce a new term into the terrestrial synthesis, generate new forces, and present—so to speak—a new philosophic fulcrum to every question. We hail the dawn of a new epoch, and the revolution now approaching will embrace a large portion of humanity. Now every new *aim* calls new elements into action among the peoples.

But leaving aside the principal question, why do my objectors forget in their turn that *the people*—the only true revolutionary force existing

eternal element of every social organisation with one of its successive developments; and to believe that mission fulfilled which is but modified and enlarged. This error has led us to break the unity of the conception precisely where it demands the widest extension; to mistake the function of the eighteenth century, and to make of a negation the point of departure for the nineteenth. We abandoned the religious idea precisely when it was most urgent to revive and extend it until it should embrace the sum of things

—has never yet descended into the arena? That our recollections have never gone beyond the circle of a military or bourgeois *caste?* That the multitudes have never been called upon to participate in the enterprise? Why do they forget that insurrection with us has never yet assumed an avowedly *Italian* character? Why argue against a *republican* revolution such as we are striving to create, from the ill success of the *monarchical* movements of 1821? Can we calculate the consequences of the action of a principle contrary to it? Between us, the republicans of Young Italy, and those who have acted before us; between those who seek to raise the multitudes to the cry of *God and the people*, and the timid and illogical men who forgot God and feared the people, the difference is immense.

The movements of Modena and Bologna failed because unsupported by France. True. What insurrection would not fail if betrayed by the very principle upon which it had based its existence? Now the principle upon which the insurrectionary governments of Italy had exclusively relied, was the principle of *non-intervention*. Their blind belief in non-intervention withheld them from the only course of action that might have saved them. The masses were repulsed by them; the young discouraged; the power of *initiative* unrecognised; the duty of arming neglected; the national idea denied; and the insurrection restricted within the limits of a province. But are these sources of weakness *permanent?* Every Italian whose patriotism has not been perverted in the councils of the Parisian *juste milieu* will tell you, that if our endeavours are still fruitless, if even yet we number more martyrs than soldiers, we owe it above all things to the opinion that the *initiative* of the European struggle belongs to France, and that so long as she remains inert, none should attempt to move.

destined to be transformed, and unite in one grand social conception the forces that are now isolated and divided.

The eighteenth century, too generally regarded as an age of mere scepticism and negation, devoted solely to a labour of criticism, had yet a faith of its own, a mission of its own, and a practical method for the realisation of that mission. Its faith was a Titanic, limitless belief in human power and in human liberty. Its measure was *to take stock*—if I may be allowed the expression—of the first epoch of the European world; to sum up, and reduce to a concrete

It is therefore of urgent necessity to combat this opinion, which is preached precisely by those who are powerful in means and influence, and who therefore ought to be the first to act. It is an opinion destructive to the conscience and the future of the peoples, and the Republicans of France ought to unite with us in opposing it. My purpose is not to reproach France, but to invite her to introduce a new language and new tendency into the Republican press more in harmony with the new mission. Reproaches are for those who, dwelling among the oppressed peoples, increase the difficulties of the work of emancipation by a pretended belief, which in most of them is in fact but the absence of all earnest conviction; reproaches are for those who, while they boast themselves the apostles of an Humanitarian synthesis, follow out the doctrine of one sole revealer and its negation of continuous human progress, from consequence to consequence, till they are led to deny the progressive intellectual sovereignty of the people, and to evoke I know not what renovation of the Papacy. Reproaches are for those who declare it *impossible for humanity to exist until France shall be hailed queen of the universe* ("v. Histoire Parlementaire de la Revolution Francaise," *Christ et Peuple*, par A. Seguier). Nor is this the isolated idea of this or that individual, but the idea of a school. Now I protest against the doctrines of that school; against its national egotism, and against its usurping tendencies. But regarding as brothers all those who understand the association of free men and equals, I feel a peculiar affection for the people which for fifty years fought in the name of the emancipation of the nations, and translated the grand results of the Christian epoch into the political sphere.

formula, that which eighteen centuries of Christianity had examined, evolved, and achieved; to constitute the *individual* such as he was destined and designed to be—free, sacred, and inviolable. And this mission it accomplished through the French Revolution—which was the political translation of the Protestant revolution;* a manifestation eminently religious, whatever may be said by those superficial writers who judge a whole period by the errors of individuals, secondary actors in the great drama. The instrument adopted to work out the revolution, and reach the aim it was its mission to achieve, was the idea of *right*. From the theory of *right* it derived its power, its mandate, the legitimacy of its acts. The *declaration of the rights of man* is the supreme and ultimate formula of the French Revolution.

And what, indeed, is man, individual man, if not a right? In the series of the terms of progress does he not represent the human personality, the element of individual emancipation? And the aim of the eighteenth century was to fulfil the *human* evolution which had been anticipated and

* It is a mistake to judge the work of moral emancipation achieved by the Reformation by the incident of that *protest* against the diet of Spires, which gave rise to the word Protestantism. Protestantism was not, as neo-Christians affirm, a work of negation or of criticism with regard to the epoch; it was a *positive* Christian production, a solemn manifestation of the *individual* man—sole object and aim of Christianity. It protested, it is true, but only against the Papacy, which, by *willing* that which it was incapable of achieving, and attempting to found a *social* unity with an *individual* instrument, of necessity degenerated into tyranny, and thus placed itself beyond the pale of the Christian synthesis—which ordained that man should be *free*—before it had attained its complete development. It was a protest, therefore, not *against* the synthesis of its epoch, but in *favour* of that synthesis, which the Papacy—impotent to realise its sublime instinct of the future—annihilated, instead of fostering and promoting.

foreseen by the ancients, proclaimed by Christianity, and in part realised by Protestantism. A multitude of obstacles stood between the century and that aim, every description of impediment and restraint upon the spontaneity and free development of individual faculties; prohibitions, rules, and precepts limiting human activity; the traditions of a past activity now decayed; aristocracies wearing a semblance of intellect and power; religious forms forbidding movement and advance.

It was necessary to overthrow all these, and the eighteenth century overthrew them. It waged a terrible but victorious war against all things tending to fractionise human power; to deny movement, or to arrest the flight of intelligence.

Every great revolution demands a great idea to be its centre of action; to furnish it with both lever and fulcrum for the work it has to do. This conception the eighteenth century supplied by placing itself in the centre of its own *subject*. It was the Ego, the human conscience, the *Ego sum* of Christ to the powers of his day.

Firm on that centre as its base, the Revolution, conscious of its own strength and sovereignty by right of conquest, disdained to prove to the world its origin, its link with the past. It simply affirmed. It cried aloud like Fichte: *there is no liberty without equality: all men are equal.* After this it began to deny. It denied the inert past; it denied feudalism, aristocracy, monarchy. It denied the Catholic* dogma of absolute passivity that poisoned the

* None can, on any rational ground, accuse me of failing to recognise the Catholic spirit that presides over the destinies of modern civilisation. All are aware of the meaning generally given to the word *Catholic*. If Catholic had assumed no other meaning than universal, I would call to mind that every religion naturally tends to become Catholic, and most especially so that synthesis which inscribes *Humanity* at the head of its formulæ.

sources of liberty, and placed despotism at the summit of the social edifice. Ruins there were without end, but in the midst of those ruins and negations one immense affirmation stood erect; the creature of God, ready to *act*, radiant in power and will; the *ecce homo*, repeated after eighteen centuries of struggle and suffering; not by the voice of the martyr, but from the altar raised by the revolution to Victory—Right, the faith of individuality, rooted in the world for ever.

And is this all we seek? Ought man, gifted with progressive activity, to remain quiescent like an emancipated slave, satisfied with his solitary liberty? Does naught remain in fulfilment of his mission on earth, but a work of consequences and deductions to be translated into the sphere of fact; or conquests to be watched over and defended?

Because the human *unknown quantity* has been determined, because one among the terms of progress—that of the *individual*—has taken its place among the known and defined quantities, is the series of terms composing the great equation concluded? Is the faculty of progress exhausted? Is naught but rotatory motion left to us?

Because man, consecrated by the power of thought king of the earth, has burst the bonds of a worn-out religious form that imprisoned and restrained his activity and independence, are we to have no new bond of universal fraternity? no religion? no recognised and accepted conception of a general and providential law?

No, eternal God! Thy Word is not all fulfilled; thy thought, the thought of the world, not all revealed. That thought creates still, and will continue to create for ages incalculable by man. The ages that have passed have but revealed to us some fragments of it. Our mission is

not concluded. As yet we scarcely know its origin, we know not its ultimate aim. Time and discovery do but enlarge its boundaries. It is elevated from age to age towards destinies unknown to us, seeking the law of which as yet we know but the first lines. From initiation to initiation, throughout the series of thy successive incarnations, this mission has purified and enlarged the formula of sacrifice; it learns the path it has to follow by the study of an eternally progressive faith. Forms are modified and dissolved—religious beliefs are exhausted. The human spirit leaves them behind as the traveller leaves behind the fires that warmed him through the night, and seeks another scene. But religion remains: the idea is immortal, survives the dead forms, and is reborn from its own ashes. The idea detaches itself from the worn-out symbol, disengages itself from its *involucrum*, which analysis has consumed, and shines forth in purity and brightness, a new star in humanity's heaven. How many such shall faith kindle ere the whole path of the future shall be illumined? Who shall tell how many stars—secular thoughts, liberated from every cloud—shall arise and take their place in the heaven of intellect, ere man, the living summary of the terrestrial Word, may declare: *I have faith in myself, my destiny is accomplished.*

Such is the law. One labour succeeds another; one synthesis succeeds another, and the latest revealed ever presides over the work we have to accomplish, and prescribes its method and organisation. It comprehends all the terms included in the preceding synthesis, *plus* the new term, which becomes the *aim* of every endeavour, the unknown quantity to be determined, and added to the known. Analysis also has its share in the labour done; but it derives its programme and point of departure from

the synthesis of the epoch. Analysis, in fact, has no life of its own: its existence is merely objective, it derives its purpose, law, and mission elsewhere. A portion of every epoch, it is the insignia of none. Those writers who divide the epochs into two classes—organic and critical—falsify history. Every epoch is essentially synthetic; every epoch is organic. The progressive evolution of the thought of God, of which our world is the visible manifestation, is unceasingly continuous. The chain cannot be broken or interrupted. The various *aims* are united together—the cradle is linked to the tomb.

* * *

No sooner, therefore, had the French Revolution concluded one epoch, than the first rays of another appeared above the horizon. No sooner had the triumph of the human individual been proclaimed by the charter of rights, than intelligence foretold a new charter, the charter of *Principles*. No sooner was the unknown quantity of the so-called middle ages determined and the aim of the Christian synthesis achieved,* than a new unknown quantity, a new aim, was set before the present generation.

On every side the doubt has arisen—of what advantage is liberty? Of what advantage equality, which is in fact

* I foresee that it will be objected that the conquest of human rights is an illusion; that slavery and inequality still endure on every side; that the struggle was but commenced by the French Revolution. I shall be told that the principle of individuality still governs every question, and that while I am speaking of a new epoch inefficacious prayers are everywhere put up for the accomplishment and realisation in action of the very synthesis which I have stated to be exhausted.

We must not confound the discovery of a term of progress with its

but the liberty of all? What is the free man but an activity, a force, to be put in motion? In what direction shall he move? As chance or caprice may direct? But that is not *life*, it is a mere succession of acts, of phenomena, of emissions of vitality, without bond, relation, or continuity; it is anarchy. The liberty of the one will inevitably clash with the liberty of others; constant strife will arise between individual and individual, and consequent loss of force, and waste of the productive faculties vouchsafed to us, and which we are bound to regard as sacred. The liberty of all, if ungoverned by any general directing law, will but lead to a state of warfare among men, a warfare rendered all the more cruel and inexorable by the virtual equality of the antagonists.

Men deemed they had found a remedy for these evils when they raised up from the foot of that cross of Christ which rules above an entire epoch of the world's history,

triumph in the sphere of reality; the intellectual evolution of the thought of an epoch, with its *material* application; the ideal conquest, with its practical consequences.

The *positive* application of a given term of progress to the different branches of the civil, political, and economic organism, can only be successfully begun after its moral development in the intellectual sphere is complete. That moral development is the labour of an epoch, and no sooner is it complete than a power—either individual or people—arises to proclaim its results and consign its formula to the keeping of the nations. A new epoch then begins, in which—while the intellect of humanity is occupied with the newly-revealed term—the term of the past and exhausted epoch is by degrees practically realised and applied. The thought of one epoch is only verified in the sphere of *action*, when the human *intellect* is already absorbed in the contemplation of the thought of its successor. Were it not so, the connection and coherence of the epochs would be interrupted, and a solution of continuity would take place.

Now, I affirm, that if the material application of the terms *liberty* and *equality* has not been attained—nor will be until a people have

the formula of fraternity bestowed by the god-like man upon the human race; that sublime formula, unknown to the pagan world, but for which the Christian world had—often unconsciously—fought many a holy fight from the Crusades to Lepanto. Liberty, equality, and fraternity, inscribed upon every banner, became the programme of the future, and men attempted to confine progress within the circle marked out by those three points. But progress broke through the circle; the eternal *cui bono* reappeared. For we, all of us, demanded an *aim*, a human aim. What is existence other than an aim, and the means of an achievement? Now fraternity does not supply any general social terrestrial aim; it does not even imply the necessity of an aim. It has no essential and inevitable relation with a purpose or intent calculated to harmonise the sum of human faculties and forces. Fraternity is undoubtedly the basis of all society, the first condition of social progress, but it is

indicated a new term as the aim of the general endeavour—their *moral* development is complete. I affirm that the *unknown quantity* of the middle ages *is* transferred to the member of the equation containing the known quantities: the *hypothesis* of the middle ages is the principle of the present day; the *idea* of the middle ages is now a recognised admitted law. Does any one now deny liberty and equality in principle? Does any one attempt to raise doubts as to the theory of rights? The most illiberal monarch living fails not to invoke the name of that liberty he secretly abhors; to assert that he is the protector of the *rights* and *liberties* of his subjects against the anarchy of factions. The question is, in the sphere of principles, decided. The only struggle is as to the application. The dispute no longer regards the law itself, but its interpretation.

The individual is no longer the *aim* of human endeavour. The individual will reappear in new sacredness, when, by the promulgation of the *social* law, the rights and duties of individual existence are made to harmonise with that law. Hitherto the worship accorded to individuality has given rise to an ignoble individualism, a nameless egotism and immorality.

not progress; it renders it possible—it is an indispensable element of it—but it is not its definition. Fraternity is not inconsistent with the theory of movement in a circle. And the human mind began to understand these things; began to perceive that fraternity, though a necessary link between the terms liberty and equality—which sum up the individual synthesis—does not pass beyond that synthesis; that its action is limited to the action of individual upon individual, that it might be denominated charity, and that though it may constitute a starting-point whence humanity advances in search of a social synthesis, it may not be substituted for that synthesis.

This being understood, human research recommenced, men began to perceive that the aim, the function of existence, must also be the ultimate term of that progressive development which constitutes existence itself; and that, therefore, in order to advance rapidly and directly towards that aim, it was first necessary to determine with exactitude the nature of that progressive development, and to act in accordance with it. *To know the Law, and regulate human activity to the Law:* such is the best mode of stating the problem.

Now the law of the individual can only be deduced from the law of the species. The individual mission can only be ascertained and defined by placing ourselves upon an elevation, enabling us to grasp and comprehend the whole We must reascend to the conception of *Humanity*, in order to ascertain the secret, rule, and law of life of the individual, of man. Hence the necessity of a general co operation, of harmony of effort,—in a word, of *association*, —in order to fulfil the work of all.*

* "Association," I am sometimes told, "is no new principle. By prefixing it as the universal aim, you therefore neither create a new

Hence also the necessity of a complete alteration in the organisation of the revolutionary party, in our theories of government, and in our philosophical, political, and economical studies; all of which have hitherto been inspired solely by the principle of liberty. The sacred word Humanity, pronounced with a new meaning, has opened up a new world before the eye of genius—a new world as yet only forefelt—and commenced a new epoch.

synthesis, nor the necessity for one. Association is only a method, a means of realising liberty and equality: it is a part of the old synthesis, nor do we see the necessity for a new one."

I admit that association, in the usual acceptation of the word, is nothing more than the *method of progress*, the means by which progress is gradually accomplished. With every step in advance, association gains a corresponding degree of power and extension, and in this sense the tendency to association may be said to be contemporary with that progress, initiated—in regard to man—with the earliest existence of our planet. It has exercised an action in all the syntheses now exhausted, and will exercise still greater influence in the synthesis we seek to enthrone. But although its action always existed, mankind were unconscious of it, and influenced by it without being themselves aware of it. Such has been the case with progress itself, with the law of gravity, with all great moral and physical truths. Their action existed long before it was revealed to us.

But is not the difference between a law unknown, and a law declared, promulgated, and accepted, sufficient to constitute a new starting-point for the activity of the human intellect? The law once defined, the regulation of our action by it becomes a *duty:* its fulfilment becomes the aim of all human endeavour, and the method of deriving the maximum of utility from its fulfilment becomes the study of every thinker. The human intellect no longer wastes precious time in researches, the object of which has been realised. Power is increased a hundred-fold when it is concentrated, and a definite direction is given to its action. Previously to the promulgation of the law, the mere instinctive sense of its existence could do no more than constitute a *right*, and a right almost always contested.

Great historical epochs do not date from the existence of a law, a truth, or a principle; but from the time of their promulgation. Were

Is any book required to prove this? or is a longer explanation and development of the subject necessary in order to prove that such is indeed the actual intellectual movement, and that the labour and business of the age is the discovery of its own synthesis? Have not all our schools of philosophy for the last twenty years—even when abandoning the true path, and returning to the past—been seeking the great unknown quantity? Do not even

it not so, it would be idle to speak of distinct epochs or syntheses: truth is one, and eternal; and the thought of God, in which was the germ of the world, contained them all.

Equality existed as a principle long before Jesus, and the world was unconsciously tending towards it. Why then admit the existence of a Christian epoch?

The earth described its revolutions round the sun without awaiting the revelations of Copernicus and Galileo, or the Newtonian formulæ. Why then do we make distinct astronomical epochs of the systems of Ptolemy and Newton?

And in days nearer our own, do not the theories of the English school of economists, and those (too soon forgotten) of the Saint Simonians, constitute two distinct periods of economical science? Yet the substitution of the principle of association for that of liberty is nevertheless the sole difference between the one and the other.

Now I believe that the time has arrived when the principle of association, solemnly and universally promulgated, should become the starting-point of all theoretical and practical studies, having for their aim the progressive organisation of human society, and be placed at the summit of our constitutions, our codes, and our formulæ of faith. And I say, moreover, that the promulgation of a term directing our researches upon a path absolutely different from any yet tried, is sufficient to constitute, or at least to indicate, a new epoch.

For the rest, ours is not a formula of association only; it is—Europe, and, through its means, humanity, associated in the completeness of all its faculties and all its forces, under the indispensable conditions of liberty, equality, and fraternity, for the realisation of a *common aim*, the discovery and progressive application of its law of life.

those whose interest it is to lead the human mind away from that search confess this? Our Catholicism of the present day seeks to reconcile Gregory VII. and Luther; the Papacy with the freedom and independence of the human spirit. . . . And we daily hear the word humanity proffered by the lips of materialists who are incapable of appreciating its meaning, and ever and anon betray their natural tendencies to the individualism of the empire. Whether as a real belief or as an enforced homage, the new epoch obtains its due acknowledgment from intellect almost without exception.

Some of the more fervid apostles of progress lamented a short time ago that our enemies pirated our words without even understanding their meaning. But the complaint is puerile. It is precisely in such agreement, instructive or compulsory though it be, that we trace a visible sign of the Word of the New Epoch, Humanity.

Every epoch has a faith of its own. Every synthesis contains the idea of an aim, of a mission. And every mission has its special instrument, its special forces, and its special lever of action. He who should attempt to realise the mission of a given epoch with the instrument of another, would have to pass through an indefinite series of inefficacious endeavours. Overcome by the want of analogy between the means and the end, he might become a martyr, never a victor.

Such is the point to which we have arrived. We all feel, both in heart and brain, the presentiment of a great epoch; and we have sought to make of the negations and analyses with which the eighteenth century was compelled to surround its newly-acquired victory, the banner of the faith of that epoch. Inspired by God to utter the sublime words—regeneration, progress, new mission, the future—

we yet persist in striving to realise the material triumph of the programme contained in those words, with the instrument that served for the realisation of a mission now concluded. We invoke a *social* world, a vast harmonious organisation of the forces existing in undirected activity in that vast laboratory, the earth ;—and in order to call this new world into existence, and to lay the foundation of a pacific organisation, we have recourse to those old habits of rebellion which consume our forces within the circle of *individualism*. We proclaim the future from the midst of ruins. Prisoners, whose chain had but been lengthened, we boasted ourselves emancipated and free because we found ourselves able to move around the column to which we were bound.

It is for this that faith slumbers in the heart of the peoples : for this that the blood of an entire nation fails to rekindle it.

* * *

Faith requires an *aim* capable of embracing *life* as a whole, of concentrating all its manifestations, of directing its various modes of activity, or of repressing them all in favour of one alone. It requires an earnest, unalterable conviction that that aim will be realised ; a profound belief in a mission, and the obligation to fulfil it ; and the consciousness of a supreme power watching over the path of the faithful towards its accomplishment. These elements are indispensable to faith ; and where any one of these is wanting, we shall have sects, schools, political parties, but no faith ; no constant hourly sacrifice for the sake of a great religious idea.

Now we have no definite religious idea, no profound

belief in an obligation entailed by a mission, no consciousness of a supreme protecting power. Our actual apostolate is a mere analytical opposition; our weapons are *interests*, and our chief instrument of action is a theory of rights. We are, all of us, notwithstanding our sublime presentiments, the sons of rebellion. We advance, like renegades, without a God, without a law, without a banner to lead us towards the future. Our former aim has vanished from our view; the new, dimly seen for an instant, is effaced by that doctrine of rights which alone directs our labours. We make of the *individual* both the means and the aim. We talk of Humanity—a formula essentially religious—and banish religion from our work. We talk of synthesis, and yet neglect the most powerful and active element of human existence. Bold enough to be undaunted by the dream of the material unity of Europe, we thoughtlessly destroy its moral unity by failing to recognise the primary condition of all association,—uniformity of sanction and belief. And it is amidst such contradictions that we pretend to renew a world.

I do not exaggerate. I know there are exceptions, and I admire them. But the mass of our party is as I describe it. Its presentiments and desires belong to the new epoch; the character of its organisation, and the means of which it seeks to avail itself, belong to the old. The party has long had an instinctive sense of a great mission confided to it; but it neither understands the true nature of that mission or the instruments fitted to achieve it. It is therefore incapable of success, and will remain so until it comprehends that the cry of "*God wills it*" must be the eternal watchword of every undertaking like our own, having sacrifice for its basis, the people for its instrument, and Humanity for its aim.

What! you complain that faith is dead or dying, that the souls of men are withered by the breath of egotism, and yet you scorn all belief, and proclaim in your writings that religion is no more; that its day is over, and that there is no religious future for the peoples!

You marvel at the slow advance of the peoples on the path of sacrifice and association, and yet you propose to them a programme of individuality, the sole value of which is negative; the result of which is a method, not of organisation, but of juxtaposition, which, if analysed, will be found to be nothing more than egotism wrapped in a mantle of philosophic formulæ!

You seek to perform a work of regeneration, and,—since without this all political organisation is fruitless—of moral personal amelioration; and you hope to accomplish it by banishing every religious idea from your work!

Politics merely accept man as he is, in his actual position and character; define his tendencies, and regulate his action in harmony with them. The religious idea alone has power to transform both.

The religious idea is the very breath of Humanity; its life, soul, conscience, and manifestation. Humanity only exists in the consciousness of its origin and the presentiment of its destiny; and only reveals itself by concentrating its powers upon some one of the intermediate points between these two. Now this is precisely the function of the religious idea. That idea constitutes a faith in an origin common to us all; sets before us, as a principle, a common future; unites all the active faculties on one sole centre, whence they are continuously evolved and developed in the direction of that future, and guides the latent forces of the human mind towards it. It lays hold of life in its every aspect, and in its slightest manifestations; utters its augury

over the cradle and the tomb, and affords—philosophically speaking—at once the highest and the most universal formula of a given epoch of civilisation; the most simple and comprehensive expression of its *knowledge* (scientia); the ruling synthesis by which it is governed as a whole, and by which its successive evolutions are directed from on high.

Viewed with regard to the individual, the religious conception is the sign of the relation existing between him and the epoch to which he belongs; the revelation of his function and rule of life; the device beneath which he fulfils it. That conception elevates and purifies the individual, and destroys egotism within him by transporting the centre of activity from the inward to the outward. It has created for man that theory of *duty* which is the parent of sacrifice; which has inspired, and ever will inspire, him to high and holy things; the sublime theory which brings man nearer to God, lends to the human creature a spark of omnipotence, overleaps every obstacle, and converts the scaffold of the martyr into a ladder of triumph. It is as far above the narrow and imperfect theory of rights as the law itself is above any one of its consequences.*

Right is the faith of the individual. Duty is the common collective faith. Right can but organise resistance: it may destroy, it cannot found. Duty builds up, associates, and unites; it is derived from a general law, whereas

* The theory of rights is visibly a secondary idea, a deduction, which has lost sight of the principle from which it sprang; a consequence which has been elevated into an absolute doctrine, and granted a life of its own.

Every right exists in virtue of a law; the law of the Being, the law which defines the nature of the subject in question. What is the law? I know not: its discovery is the aim of the actual epoch; but the certainty that such a law exists is sufficient to necessitate the substitution of the idea of Duty for the idea of Right.

Right is derived only from human will. There is nothing therefore to forbid a struggle against Right: any individual may rebel against any right in another which is injurious to him; and the sole judge left between the adversaries is Force; and such, in fact, has frequently been the answer which societies based upon right have given to their opponents.

Societies based upon Duty would not be compelled to have recourse to force; duty, once admitted as the rule, excludes the possibility of struggle; and by rendering the individual subject to the general aim, it cuts at the very root of those evils which Right is unable to prevent, and only affects to cure. Moreover, progress is not a necessary result of the doctrine of Right, it merely admits it as a fact. The exercise of rights being of necessity limited by capacity, progress is abandoned to the arbitrary rule of an unregulated and aimless liberty.

The doctrine of Rights puts an end to sacrifice, and cancels martyrdom from the world: in every theory of individual rights, interests become the governing and motive power, and martyrdom an absurdity, for what interest can endure beyond the tomb? Yet, how often has martyrdom been the initiation of progress, the baptism of a world!

Every doctrine not based upon Progress considered as a necessary law is inferior to the idea and the demands of the epoch. Yet the doctrine of rights still rules us with sovereign sway; rules even that republican party which assumes to be the party of progress and initiation in Europe; and the liberty of the republicans—although they instinctively proffer the words duty, sacrifice, and mission—is still a theory of resistance; their religion—if indeed they speak of any—a formula of the relation between God and the individual; the political organisation they invoke

and dignify by the name of *social*, a mere series of defences raised up around laws framed to secure the liberty of *each* to follow out his *own* aim, his own tendencies, and his own interests; their definition of the Law does not go beyond the expression of the general will; their formula of association is society founded on Rights; their faith does not overpass the limits traced out nearly a century ago by a man—himself the incarnation of struggle—in a declaration of rights. Their theories of government are theories of *distrust;* their organic problem, a remnant of patched-up Constitutionalism, reduces itself to the discovery of a point around which individuality and association, liberty and law, may oscillate for ever in resultless hostility; their *people* is too often a *caste*—the most useful and numerous, it is true—in open rebellion against other castes, and seeking to enjoy in its turn the rights given by God to all their republic is the turbulent, intolerant democracy of Athens;* their war-cry a cry of vengeance, and their symbol Spartacus.

Now this is the eighteenth century over again—its philosophy; its *human* synthesis; its materialist policy; its spirit of analysis and Protestant criticism; its sover-

* The word democracy, although it expresses energetically and with historical precision the secret of the ancient world, is—like all the political phrases of antiquity—below the conception of the future Epoch which we republicans are bound to initiate. The expression *Social Government* would be preferable as indicative of the idea of association, which is the life of the Epoch. The word democracy was inspired by an idea of rebellion, sacred at the time, but still rebellion. Now every such idea is imperfect, and inferior to the idea of unity which will be the dogma of the future. Democracy is suggestive of struggle; it is the cry of Spartacus, the expression and manifestation of a people in its first arising. Government—the social institution—represents a people triumphant; a people that constitutes itself. The gradual extinction of aristocracy will cancel the word democracy.

eignty of the individual; its negation of an ancient religious formula; its distrust of all authority; its spirit of emancipation and resistance. It is the French Revolution over again; the past, with the additions of a few presentiments; servitude to old things surrounded with a prestige of youth and novelty.

* * *

THE past is fatal to our party. The French Revolution—I say it with deep conviction—crushes us. It weighs like an incubus upon our hearts, and forbids them to beat. Dazzled by the grandeur of that titanic struggle, we prostrate ourselves before it even yet. We expect its programme to furnish us with both men and things; we strive to copy Robespierre and St. Just, and search the records of the *Clubs* of 1791 and 1793 for titles to give to the *sections* of 1833 and 1834. But while we thus ape our fathers, we forget that their greatness consisted in the fact that they aped no one. They derived their inspiration from contemporary sources, from the wants of the masses, from the elements by which they were surrounded. And it was precisely because the instruments they used were adapted to the aim they had in view that they achieved miracles.

Why should we not do as they have done? Why, while we study and respect tradition, should we not advance? It is our duty to venerate our fathers' greatness, and to demand of their sepulchres a pledge of the future, but not the future itself; God alone, the Father of all revelations and of all epochs, can direct us upon its boundless path.

Let us arise, therefore, and endeavour to be great in our turn. To be so, we must comprehend our mission in all its

completeness. We—the men of the present—are standing between two epochs; between the tomb of one world and the cradle of another; between the boundary-line of the individual synthesis and the confines of the synthesis Humanity. What we have to do is to fix our eyes upon the future while we break the last links of the chain that binds us to the past, and deliberately advance. We have emancipated ourselves from the abuses of the past; let us now emancipate ourselves from its glories. The eighteenth century has done its work. Our forefathers sleep proudly and calmly in their tombs: they repose, wrapped in their flag, like warriors after a battle. Fear not to offend them. Their banner, dyed red in the blood of Christ, transmitted by Luther to the *Convention*, to be raised upon the corpses of those slain in the battles of the peoples, is a sacred legacy to us all. None will venture to lay hands upon it; and we will return hereafter and lay at its foot, where our fathers lie buried, the laurels we have won in turn.

Our present duty is to found the policy of the nineteenth century; to re-ascend, through philosophy, to faith; to define and organise association; to proclaim Humanity; to initiate a new epoch. Upon that initiation does the material realisation of the past epoch depend.

These things are not new. I know it, and confess it gladly. My voice is but one among many that have announced nearly the same ideas; affirming that *association* is the fundamental principle by which our political labours should henceforth be directed. Many great men have condemned the exclusive worship of the doctrine of Rights, the ultimate formula of *individuality* now degenerating into materialism: many schools, both past and present, have invoked Duty, as the anchor of salvation for society tormented by inefficacious aspirations.

Why then do I insist so much upon their want of foresight? What matters it whether they preach the adoption of this term as the centre of a new programme, or only as a development of the old? So long as they join with us in crying *forward!* what matters it that they persist in confounding *association* with *fraternity;* or Humanity—the complex unity of all the human faculties organised in the pursuit of the same aim—with the liberty and equality of all men? Wherefore, by promulgating the idea of a new epoch, create a new enterprise and consequently new difficulties?

Is our question, then, a mere question of words alone?

I do not think so.

It is important to affirm the new epoch: to affirm that what we now preach is, in fact, a new programme; and this for a reason that should be universally recognised and admitted. The desire not merely to think but to act. We are seeking not merely the emancipation of a people, but the emancipation of the peoples.

Now the true emancipation of the peoples can only be effected through the conscience of the peoples. They will not act efficaciously until they recognise a newly-revealed *aim*, for the realisation of which the labour of all, the equality of all, and an *initiative*, are required. Until they arrive at the recognition of such an aim, there is no hope of faith, sacrifice, or active enthusiasm from them. They will remain inert; and, dominated by the prestige of the previous initiative, they will leave the duty of realising and exhausting its consequences to that people, who, by assuming the glory of the initiative, rendered themselves responsible for its fulfilment.

They will be content to follow slowly in their footsteps, but do no more. And if, for reasons to them unknown

that people should stop short upon the way, they will stop short also. Silence, inaction, and suspension of life will follow. Such is the spectacle presented by Europe at the present day.

The idea of a new epoch, by implying a new aim to be reached, leaves the initiative to the future, and thereby awakens the general conscience to activity. It substitutes spontaneity for imitation; the achievement of a special mission for the mere performance of an executive part in the mission of others; Europe for France. We thus furnish a new element of revolutionary activity.

By the affirmation of a new epoch, we affirm the existence of a new synthesis; a general idea destined to embrace all the terms of the anterior synthesis, *plus* one; and starting from that new term to co-ordinate all the historical series, all the facts, all the manifestations of life, all the aspects of the human problem, all the branches of human knowledge that are ranged beneath it. We give a new and fruitful impulse to the labours of intelligence; we proclaim the necessity for a new encyclopædia, which, by summing up and comprehending all the progress achieved, would constitute a new progress in itself. We place beyond all controversy, in the rank of ascertained truths, all the terms which have been the aim of past revolutions,—the liberty, equality, and fraternity of men and of peoples. We separate ourselves for ever from the epoch of exclusive individuality, and, still more decisively therefore, from that individualism which is the materialism of that epoch. We close up the paths to the past.

And finally, by that affirmation we reject every doctrine of eclecticism and transition; every imperfect formula containing the statement of a problem without any attempt to

solve it; every school seeking to conjoin life and death, and to renew the world through the medium of an extinct synthesis.

By the very character of the epoch we proclaim, we furnish a new basis to the principle of universal suffrage; we elevate the political question to the height of a philosophical conception; we substitute an apostolate of Humanity by asserting that common law of nations which should be the sign of our faith. We consecrate those sudden, spontaneous, collective movements of the people which will initiate and translate the new synthesis in action. We lay the foundations of an humanitarian faith, to the height of which the republican party must elevate itself in order to succeed. For every epoch has its baptism of faith: our epoch lacks that baptism as yet, but we can at least make ourselves its precursors.

* * *

OURS is then no idle contest of words alone. Upon the direction now chosen by the party, I believe, depends the success or failure of the cause we sustain. It was as a political party that we fell. It is as a religious party that we must rise again. The religious element is universal, immortal: it both universalises and unites. Every great revolution has borne its stamp, and revealed it in its origin or in its aim. Through it is association founded. The initiators of a new world, we are bound to lay the foundations of a moral unity, an humanitarian Catholicism.

We advance, encouraged by the sacred promise of Jesus; we seek the new gospel, of which, before dying, he gave us the immortal hope, and of which the Christian gospel is but the germ, even as man is the germ of Humanity.

Upon the soil rendered fruitful by the blood of fifty generations of martyrs, we stand with Lessing to hail the gigantic future, wherein the lever of action shall rest upon the fatherland as its fulcrum, with Humanity for its scope and aim; wherein the peoples shall bind themselves in a common pact, and meet in brotherhood to define the future mission of each, the function of each in the general association, governed by one Law for all, one God for all.

It is our part to hasten the moment when revolution, the alarum of the peoples, shall summon a convention which shall be a council-general in truth. Our war must therefore be a holy war; a crusade. The name of God must be inscribed upon our banner and govern our actions. Upon the ruins of the old world a new territory will arise, whereon the peoples shall burn the incense of reconciliation. And may each of us be able to answer, when asked: *Whence come you? In the name of whom* do you preach?

I have frequently heard these questions asked. It has been frequently affirmed of our little nucleus of apostolate, that we republicans lack a philosophical origin, an incontrovertible principle, as the source of our belief. It is worthy of note, that they who make this accusation are men who believe themselves possessed of a philosophy, because some of their followers have made a collection of philosophies; a religion, because they have priests; a political doctrine, because they have grapeshot and spies. Nevertheless, the cry has been taken up by men of good faith, who could not fail to observe the want of unity visible in our ranks; the absence of a harmonising synthesis and religious belief, not easily reconciled with that social and religious aim the republicans continually profess.

Now we can answer:

We come in the name of God and Humanity.

We believe in one God; the author of all existence; the absolute living Thought, of whom our world is a ray, the universe an incarnation.

We believe in a general, immutable law: a law which constitutes our mode of existence; embraces the whole series of possible phenomena; exercises a continuous action upon the universe, and all therein comprehended, but in its physical and moral aspect.

As every law assumes an aim to be reached, we believe in the progressive development of the faculties and forces—faculties in action—of all living things towards that unknown aim. Were this not so, the law would be useless, and existence unintelligible.

Every law being interpreted and verified by its *subject*, we believe in Humanity—the collective and continuous Being that sums up and comprehends the ascending series of organic creations; the most perfect manifestation of the thought of God upon our globe—as the sole interpreter of the law.

We believe that harmony between the subject and the law being the condition of all normal existence,—the known and immediate aim of all endeavour is the establishment of this harmony in ever-increasing completeness and security, through the gradual discovery and comprehension of the law, and identification of its subject with it.

We believe in association—which is but the reduction to *action* of our faith in one sole God, and one sole law, and one sole aim—as the only means we possess of realising the truth; as the method of progress; the path leading towards perfection. The highest possible degree of human progress will correspond to the discovery and application of the vastest formula of association.

We believe, therefore, in the Holy Alliance of the

Peoples as being the vastest formula of association possible in our epoch ;—in the *liberty* and *equality* of the peoples, without which no true association can exist ;—in *nationality*, which is the *conscience* of the peoples, and which, by assigning to them their part in the work of association, their function in humanity, constitutes their mission upon earth, that is to say, their *individuality ;* without which neither liberty nor equality are possible ;—in the sacred *Fatherland*, cradle of nationality ; altar and workshop of the individuals of which each people is composed.

And since the law is one ; since it governs alike the two aspects, internal and external, of the life of each being ; the two modes—personal and relative—subjective and objective—of every existence,—we hold the same creed with regard to each people, and the individuals of which it is composed, that we hold with regard to humanity, and the nations of which it is composed.

As we believe in the association of the peoples, so do we believe in the association of the individuals of which each people is composed : we believe that it is their sole method of progress, the principle destined to predominate over all their institutions, and the pledge of their harmony of action.

As we believe in the liberty and equality of the peoples, so do we believe in the liberty and equality of the men of every people, and in the inviolability of the human *Ego*, which is the conscience of the individual, and assigns to him his part in the secondary association ; his function in the nation, his special mission of citizenship with the sphere of the Fatherland.

And as we believe in Humanity as the sole interpreter of the law of God, so do we believe in the people of every state as the sole master, sole sovereign, and sole interpreter

of the law of humanity, which governs every national mission. We believe in the people, one and indivisible; recognising neither castes nor privileges, save those of genius and virtue; neither *proletariat* nor aristocracy, whether landed or financial; but simply an aggregate of faculties and forces consecrated to the well-being of all, to the administration of the common substance and possession, the terrestrial globe. We believe in the people, one and independent; so organised as to harmonise the individual faculties with the social idea; living by the fruits of its own labour, united in seeking after the greatest possible amount of general well-being, and in respect for the rights of individuals. We believe in the people bound together in brotherhood by a common faith, tradition, and idea of love; striving towards the progressive fulfilment of its special mission; consecrated to an apostolate of duties; never forgetful of a truth once attained, but never sinking into inertness in consequence of its attainment; revering the Word of past generations, yet bent on using the present as a bridge between the past and the future; adoring revelations rather than revealers, and capable of the gradual solution of the problem of its destiny on earth.

God and his law; Humanity and its work of interpretation, progress, association, liberty, and equality;—these, with that dogma of the PEOPLE, which is the vital principle of the republican party, are all united in our belief.* No achievement of the past is rejected. Before us is the

* This is not an exposition of doctrine, but a series of bases of belief, disjointed, it is true, and only affirmed; but yet containing enough to show our philosophical and religious conception. Our political creed is composed of the consequences, more or less evident and direct, of that conception. It may easily be understood how the mere fact of the affirmation of a new epoch and a new

evolution of a future in which the two eternal elements of every organisation—the individual and humanity, liberty and association—will be harmonised; in which one whole synthesis, a veritable religious formula, will—without suppressing any in favour of the rest—embrace all the revelations of progress, all the holy ideas that have been successively transmitted to us by providential design.

"When, in the presence of the Young Europe now arising, all the altars of the old world shall be overthrown, two new altars will be raised upon the soil made fruitful by the divine Word.

synthesis, removes us from all those who do but regard themselves as *continuers, so to speak*, and who believe that the *initiative* belongs to one sole people, the depositaries of the highest formula of progress hitherto attained. The principle that the new synthesis must include all the terms of the anterior synthesis, *plus* one, is the formal negation of every theory, the tendency of which is to destroy, not to harmonise; of every political school that merely leads to the substitution of one class for another, one social element for another; of every exclusive system, which—like that of Babœuf—would cancel liberty in the name of some deceptive chimera of equality; eliminate the greatest of moral facts, the *Ego*, and render all progress impossible. It is equally the negation of that American school, which makes of the individual the centre of all things; resolves every political problem in favour of mere liberty; crushes the principle of association beneath the omnipotence of the human *Ego*; condemns all progress to be made by fits and starts impossible of calculation; introduces distrust as an element of the civil organisation; dismembers the social unity into an independent duality of temporal and spiritual power; and by its doctrine that *the law is Atheist*, and its belief in the sovereignty of rights and interests, instils materialism, individualism, egotism, and contradiction into the minds of men.

Our conception of Humanity as the sole interpreter of the law of God, separates us from every school which would divide progress into two distinct epochs, and circumscribe it, as it were by force, in one sole determinate synthesis or religion; that would close up and imprison the tradition of humanity within the doctrine of one sole

"And the hand of the initiator-people shall inscribe upon one the *Fatherland*, upon the other *Humanity*. As children of the same mother, as brethren gathered together, the peoples shall assemble around those altars, and make sacrifice in peace and love.

"And the incense of those altars shall ascend to heaven in two columns, which shall gradually approach each other, until they unite on high, in God.

"And whensoever they shall be divided in their ascent, there shall be fratricide on earth: and mothers shall weep on earth and angels shall weep in heaven."*

Now suppose that all these things were repeated in

revealer; or break the continuity of human work with the doctrine of a periodical intervention from on high, a series of integral renovations absolutely separate and distinct each from the other; or a series of social *formulæ*, each of them the issue of revelation, and separated by an intermediate abyss.

Our principle of the People,—which is but the application of the dogma of humanity to each nation,—leads us to *universal suffrage*—the manifestation of the people—as a direct consequence requiring no other authorisation: it implies the exclusion of every undelegated authority, whether exercised by a man or by a caste.

The principle of association, considered as the sole means of progress, implies the complete liberty of all special and secondary associations, formed for any purpose not inconsistent with the moral law.

The principle of moral unity, without which association is impossible, implies the duty of a general elementary education which shall explain the programme of the association (society) to all its members. And the principle of the inviolability of the individual implies not only the absolute freedom of the press, the abolition of capital punishment and of every form of punishment calculated not to improve but merely to restrain or suppress the individual, but also a complete theory of labour, considered as the manifestation of the individual, and representation and expression of his *worth*.

* "Foi de la Jeune Europe."—(Unpublished.)

Europe, not as the mere expression of an individual belief, but as the Word, the conscience of the entire party of progress—suppose that the religious principle should once again illumine our path and unify our labours—suppose that the words God and Humanity were united in our popular symbol as the object and its image, the idea and the form ;—think you that our words would fail to rouse the suffering multitudes that will but wait and hope and pray until the religious cry of the Crusades—"God wills it"—be sounded in their ears? Think you that between our Holy Alliance and the accursed Pact so called; between the apostles of free and progressive movement, and the inert sophists of old Europe,—they would fail to recognise which side was with God, with his Law, his Truth?

Whereso God is, there is the people.

The instinctive philosophy of the people is Faith in Him.

And when that faith shall be not only upon your lips but in your hearts; when your acts shall correspond to your words, and virtue shall sanctify your life, as liberty has sanctified your intelligence; when united, brothers and believers, and rallied round one sole banner, you appear before mankind as seekers after Good, and they say of you amongst themselves: *These men are a living religion*—think you your appeal to the peoples will not meet with a ready response? think you that the palm of that European initiative, sought for by all and destined to benefit all, would not speedily be gathered?

Great ideas create great peoples. Let your life be the living summary of one sole organic idea. Enlarge the horizon of the peoples. Liberate their conscience from the materialism by which it is weighed down. Set a vast mission before them. Rebaptise them. Material interests

when offended do but produce émeutes; principles alone can generate revolutions. The question now agitating the world is a religious question. Analysis, and anarchy of religious belief, have extinguished faith in the hearts of the peoples. Synthesis, and unity of religious belief, will rekindle it.

Then, and then only, will that true energy which gathers new strength amid obstacles take the place of the false energy which sinks under every delusion. Then will cease the disunion and distrust that now torment us, multiplying sects, and hindering association; making a little centre of every individual; raising up camps on every side, but giving us no army; dividing mankind into poets, and men of prose and calculation; men of action, and men of intellectual speculation.

Then will disappear from amongst our party that impure and equivocal class which dishonours our ranks, and, by the introduction of a duality between word and action, creates doubts and distrust of our symbol; which prates of virtue, charity, and sacrifice, with vice in its heart, dishonour on its brow, and egotism in its soul; which leaves the stigma of its immorality upon our flag; which hides itself in the day of battle, and reappears when all danger is over, to gather up the spoils of the conquered, and contaminate and destroy the fruits of the victory.

Then will men's prejudices vanish one by one, and with them the influence of the nameless tribe of the weak and timid who blame our cry of action because themselves deficient in courage; who implore a little hope for their country as an alms for an embassy, and drag the sacredness of exile through ministerial mud; who imagine that the salvation of nations may be compassed by diplomatic artifice; who conspire by apeing the arts and habits of

police-agents; who mock at enthusiasm, deny the power of inspiration and of sacrifice, term martyrdom imprudence, and employ the calculations of arithmetic to solve the problem of the regeneration of the peoples.

Then will the numerous contradictions which render the party inferior to its mission disappear; the lips of patriots will cease to utter the word *foreigner* as a term of reproach, which in men calling themselves brothers and republicans is a blasphemy against the cross of Christ. The cowardly hesitation which yet prevents so many from openly confessing the faith that is in them, causes them to tremble at the calumnies issuing from the enemy's camp, and covers those who should stand forth as the apostles of truth with a semblance of error and crime, will cease; as well as the fascination of ancient names substituted for principles, which has been the destruction of so many revolutions by the sacrifice of the new idea to the traditions of the past. The illogical, inconsistent spirit which practically denies human unity by claiming unlimited liberty for the few, with absolute intolerance for the rest, will be overcome;—the angry polemics nourished by hatred, which attack men instead of things, assume principles only to falsify them in application, betraying every instant a spirit of petty nationalism and jealousy, and wasting energy in insignificant skirmishes, will cease; and with it our forgetfulness of the martyrs who are our Saints, the great men who are our Priests, the great deeds which are our prayers to God.

Faith, which is intellect, energy, and love, will put an end to the discords existing in a society which has neither church nor leaders; which invokes a new world, but forgets to ask its secret, its Word, from God.

With faith will revive poetry, rendered fruitful by the

breath of God, and by a holy creed. Poetry, exiled now from a world of prey to anarchy; poetry, the flower of the angels, nourished by the blood of martyrs, and watered by the tears of mothers, blossoming often among ruins, but ever coloured by the rays of dawn; poetry, a language prophetic of Humanity, European in essence, and national in form, will make known to us the fatherland of all the nations hitherto; translate the religious and social synthesis through art, and render still lovelier by its light, Woman, an angel, fallen, it is true, but yet nearer heaven than we, and hasten her redemption by restoring her to her mission of inspiration, prayer, and pity, so divinely symbolised by Christianity in Mary.

Poetry will sing to us the joys of martyrdom; the immortality of the vanquished; the tears that expiate; the sorrows that purify; the records, hopes, and traditions of the past world twining around the cradle of the new. It will whisper words of consolation to those children of suffering, sent amongst mankind too soon; those powerful but doomed souls, who, like Byron, have no confidant on earth, and whom even yet men seek to deprive of their God. Poetry will teach the young the nobleness of sacrifice, of constancy, and silence; of feeling oneself alone without despairing, in an existence of suffering unknown or misunderstood; in long years of bitterness, wounds, and delusion, endured without murmur or lament; it will teach them to have faith in things to come, and to labour unceasingly to hasten their coming, even though without hope of living to witness their triumph.

Are these illusions? Do I presume too far in asking such prodigies of faith in an age still undermined by scepticism; among men still slaves of the *Ego*, who love little and forget early; who bear about discouragement in their

hearts, and are earnest in nothing save in the calculations of egotism, and the passing pleasures of the hour?

No: I do not ask too much. It is necessary that these things should be, and they will be. I have faith in God, in the power of truth, and in the historic logic of things. I feel in my inmost heart that the delay is not for long. The principle which was the soul of the old world is exhausted. It is our part to clear the way for the new principle; and should we perish in the undertaking, it shall yet be cleared.

* * *

THE sky was dark, the heavens void; the peoples strangely agitated, or motionless in stupor. Whole nations disappeared. Others lifted their heads as if to view their fall. Throughout the world was a dull sound of dissolution. All trembled; the heavens and the earth. Man was hideous to behold. Placed between two infinites, he had no consciousness of either; neither of his future, nor of his past. All belief was extinct. Man had no faith in his gods, no belief in the republic. Society was no more: there existed a Power stifling itself in blood, or consuming itself in debauchery: a senate, miserably apeing the majesty of the past, that voted millions and statues to the tyrant; prætorians, who despised the one and slew the other: informers, sophists, and the slavish crowd who clapped their hands. Great principles were no more. Material interests existed still. The fatherland was no more; the solemn voice of Brutus had proclaimed the death of virtue from its tomb. Good men departed that they might not be defiled by contact with the world. Nerva allowed himself to die of hunger. Thraseus poured out his blood in libation to

Jupiter the Liberator. The soul of man had fled: the senses reigned alone. The multitude demanded bread and the sports of the circus. Philosophy had sunk first into scepticism, then into epicureanism, then into subtlety and words. Poetry was transformed into satire.

Yet there were moments when men were terror-struck at the solitude around them, and trembled at their isolation. They ran to embrace the cold and naked statues of their once-venerated gods; to implore of them a spark of moral life, a ray of faith, even an illusion! They departed, their prayers unheard, with despair in their hearts and blasphemy upon their lips. Such were the times; they resembled our own.

Yet this was not the death agony of the world. It was the conclusion of one evolution of the world which had reached its ultimate expression. A great epoch was exhausted, and passing away to give place to another, the first utterances of which had already been heard in the north, and which awaited but the *Initiator*, to be revealed.

He came. The soul the most full of love, the most sacredly virtuous, the most deeply inspired by God and the future, that men have yet seen on earth; Jesus. He bent over the corpse of the dead world, and whispered a word of faith. Over the clay that had lost all of man but the movement and the form, he uttered words until then unknown, *Love, Sacrifice, a heavenly origin.* And the dead arose. A new life circulated through the clay, which philosophy had tried in vain to reanimate. From that corpse arose the Christian world, the world of liberty and equality. From that clay arose the true Man, the image of God, the precursor of Humanity.

Christ expired. All he had asked of mankind wherewith to save them—says Lamennais—was a cross whereon to die.

But ere he died he had announced the *glad tidings* to the people. To those who asked of him from whence he had received it, he answered, From God, the Father. From the height of his cross he had invoked him twice. Therefore upon the cross did his victory begin and still does it endure.

Have faith, then, O you who suffer for the noble cause; apostles of a truth which the world of to-day comprehends not; warriors in the sacred fight whom it yet stigmatises with the name of rebels. To-morrow, perhaps, this world, now incredulous or indifferent, will bow down before you in holy enthusiasm. To-morrow victory will bless the banner of your crusade. Walk in faith and fear not. That which Christ has done, humanity may do. Believe, and you will conquer. Believe, and the peoples at last will follow you. Action is the Word of God; thought alone is but his shadow. They who disjoin thought and action seek to divide Deity, and deny the eternal Unity. Cast them forth from your ranks, for they who are not ready to bear witness to their faith with their blood are no true believers.

From your cross of sorrow and persecution proclaim the religion of the epoch. Soon shall it receive the consecration of faith. Let not the hateful cry of reaction be heard on your lips, nor the sombre formula of the conspirator, but the calm and solemn words of the days to come. From our cross of misery and persecution, we men of exile, the representatives in heart and faith of the enslaved races, of millions of men constrained to silence, will respond to your appeal, and say to our brothers, *The alliance is founded.* Answer your persecutors with the formula *God and the people.* They may rebel and blaspheme against it for a while, but it will be accepted and worshipped by the peoples.

Upon a day in the sixteenth century, at Rome, some men bearing the title of *Inquisitors*, who assumed to derive wisdom and authority from God himself, were assembled to decree the immobility of the earth. A prisoner stood before them. His brow was illumined by genius. He had outstripped time and mankind, and revealed the secret of a world.

It was Galileo.

The old man shook his bold and venerable head. His soul revolted against the absurd violence of those who sought to force him to deny the truths revealed to him by God. But his pristine energy was worn down by long suffering and sorrow; the monkish menace crushed him. He strove to submit. He raised his hand, he too, to declare the immobility of the earth. But as he raised his hand, he raised his weary eyes to that heaven they had searched throughout long nights to read thereon one line of the universal law; they encountered a ray of that sun which he so well knew motionless amid the moving spheres. Remorse entered his heart: an involuntary cry burst from the believer's soul: *Eppur si muove!* and yet it moves.

Three centuries have passed away. Inquisitors,—inquisition,—absurd theses imposed by force,—all these have disappeared. Naught remains but the well-established movement of the earth, and the sublime cry of Galileo floating above the ages.

Child of Humanity, raise thy brow to the sun of God, and read upon the heavens: *It moves.* Faith and action! The future is ours.

CRITICAL AND LITERARY.

LAMENNAIS.*

In 1815 a young foreigner of modest aspect and timid bearing presented himself at the town residence of Lady Jerningham, sister-in-law of Lord Stafford. He went, with an introduction I know not from whom, to seek a humble situation as teacher. He was poor, and poorly dressed. Without even bidding him to be seated, the lady put a few laconic questions to him, and then dismissed him without engaging him; because—as she told a friend—*he looked too stupid.*

That young man was Lamennais.

Nine years later, in June 1824, a priest, well known to fame through the rapid sale of 40,000 copies of his works, and through the warfare he had carried on against the revolutionary spirit of the age, with an eloquence equal to Bossuet, and learning and logic superior to his,—was travelling, full of fervid faith and hope, from France to Rome, in order to hold a conference with Leo XII. In the Pontiff's chamber the only ornaments he saw were a painting of the Virgin and his own portrait. Leo XII. received him with friendly confidence and admiration. It

* First published in the *Monthly Chronicle*, April 1839.

was by his advice that Cardinal Lambruschini was appointed to the office of Apostolic Nuncio in France. On every side he was greeted by a chorus of thanks and praise; which, although it could not dim the limpid and austere intellect of the priest, yet filled his heart with joy; for he believed it foretold a new epoch of fruitful life for his Church, and hoped that Rome might be inspired by his voice to rise to the height of the grand social mission which his own imagination, and the desires of a generation weary of scepticism and seeking for an *aim*, had attributed to her.

That priest was Lamennais.

Eight years passed away, and the same priest, now saddened and oppressed with thought, was once more treading the path to Rome, along with two companions—destined shortly after to forsake him—but who at that time shared his belief, his labours, and the incomprehensible accusations suddenly cast upon his motives and intentions. He was journeying to explain these, and to justify himself in the eyes of that Authority whose past to him was sacred, whose blessing had hallowed his cradle, and in whose service he had laboured unceasingly for twenty years. Pure in heart, and led by one of those illusions which naught but the evidence of facts can destroy—too often with the destruction also of one half of the soul—he was on his way to make one last effort to revive that decayed Authority; to endeavour to infuse one drop of the life-blood of Humanity into its exhausted veins.

Russian, Prussian, and Austrian notes had preceded him; demanding from the Pope a formal condemnation of this audacious commentator of St. Paul, who affirmed that wheresoever is the Spirit of God, there is liberty. Cardinal Lambruschini, the same to whom he had himself opened the path to hierarchical power, was adverse to him.

Gregory XVI. received him coldly, and only upon condition of his remaining silent upon the very subject that had brought him to Rome. A long letter which he addressed to him remained unanswered; perhaps even unread.

With a heart full of sorrow and bitterness; having weighed every stone of the ancient edifice, and found naught but dust and ruin, the priest departed. His gaze lingered long on the cupola of St. Peter's; no longer the sanctuary of the word of God. With a heart swelling with unshed tears—even as one who witnesses the burial of his beloved—he traversed the vast deserted Campagna; an eloquent image of the solitude daily extending around the Papal See. But he bore his faith with him across the desert, and by that faith he was saved.

He knew that the Thought of God is immortal, and that although both the direction and the interpreters of the Apostolic mission may be transformed, the mission itself cannot cease throughout the evolution of the centuries, till earth's latest day. He knew that the decay of a form of authority is naught other than its transmission; and that the death of a form of faith is naught other than its transformation.

Instead of giving himself up to despair, he meditated upon the new life destined to succeed that life extinct. His eagle glance sounded the heights and depths of the world; searching out and studying every sign annunciatory of that life to come; while he prayerfully awaited an inward inspiration that should reveal to him the site of the future temple of the Deity.

One day, when both Rome and the Monarchy believed the man crushed and conquered, he arose, as if called by an irresistible force; his voice resounded in double power, like the voice of the prophets of old; and his utterance had

all the religious solemnity of one who, after long and weary search, has found at length the truth. He preached God, the people, love, and liberty. He proclaimed the downfall of the powers of the day, and called upon the Nations to wrest from their grasp the insignia of the mission they had betrayed. The terrible accuser arose to denounce all that until then he had once defended; to raise on high all that he had once striven to overthrow. From that time forward he has never changed; nor will he ever change again.

It was—for those able to comprehend it—a great lesson. In that struggle of a devout and holy soul, between the records of the past and the previsions of the future; in that unequal, tempestuous, often wavering, but always progressive elevation of a sincere and powerful intellect in search of truth; in that ultimate, unlooked-for determination—contrasting, to outward appearance, with twenty years of previous labour,—which affixed the seal of religion upon all that the instincts of half-a-century had pointed out,—there was, on the one side, a rare psychological phenomenon, well worthy of study; and, on the other, a splendid augury and a glorious confirmation of the recent dogma of the sovereignty of the peoples. With a few exceptions, however, the lesson passed unheeded. When they beheld that powerful intellect, which they had supposed exhausted by twenty years of labour, arising giant-like between a world in ruins and a world new born; when they saw him, as if endowed with a second youth, bound across the abyss that divides the tomb from the cradle, and stand erect upon the soil of the future,—both friends and enemies recoiled in alarm. A wide circle of solitude and silence was formed around him. The first forsook him, as if they felt his unexpected daring a reproof; the last still regarded him with distrust, remembering his past. No sooner had the

upholders of the Papacy recovered themselves, than they hurled every description of calumny and outrage upon him. Forgetting the wide distinction between change the result of progress in ideas, and change the result of lust of wealth and power, they judged him as they might have judged a Thiers or a L'Herminier, attributing his sudden conversion to wounded self-love (precisely as the holy war maintained by Luther against the Papacy was attributed to venal priestly jealousy), and declared (even as others had declared of Luther) that his rebellion might have been prevented by the timely offer of a Cardinal's hat. Saint Paul at Damascus would have been incomprehensible to them.

In England, prejudice falsified the political opinions of Lamennais; and the man whom I saw but lately so full of sweetness and love; who weeps like a child at a symphony of Beethoven; who will give his last franc to the poor; who tends flowers like a woman, and steps out of his path rather than crush an ant,—was transformed by journalists into a preacher of anarchy and man of blood. Each of his works, moreover, has been criticised separately, on its political or artistic merits; and never, so far as I know, have his writings been studied, as they require to be, in their *ensemble.*

It is time that this should be done. Lamennais, as a philosopher, as a powerful writer, and as the head of a political school, is an individuality which it is important thoroughly to know. The progress of his mind is intimately linked with the progress of the epoch.

This, however, is a work I have neither time nor space to accomplish here. If I were able to follow the successive manifestations of that vast intellect one by one, I believe I could show how his philosophical theory of the general consent—or tradition—considered as the criterion of certainty,

was destined by logical necessity to lead him to the social principle of the People, sole depositary and continuer of tradition. But the few pages at my command would not suffice for this; and I shall therefore limit myself to indicating the direction to be pursued by all who are desirous of rightly studying his life and works.

Felicité Lamennais was born in 1782 at St. Malo; in that province of Brittany which gave Pelagie, Abelard, and Descartes to France, and in the same city which had witnessed the birth of Chateaubriand a few years before. His mother died during his infancy, and the wealth which his father had acquired in commerce having been lost in the Revolution, the family had not sufficient means to provide him with a regular education. The boy thus grew up in complete freedom, beneath the eye of God; untrammelled by the pedantic methods of a college, and even without a master; passing his days between the family library—where he was often shut up by an old uncle, with Horace and Tacitus for companions—and the shore of the vast ocean, dashing, like a wave of eternal poetry, against the barren rocks of Brittany.

The intellect of Lamennais developed its native sublimity and independence in the solitude, unrestrained by any formal doctrine. His imagination, nourished by the contemplation of nature, and the noble and severe poetry of the scenes by which he was surrounded, was alive to religious inspiration at a very early age. We are told by Robinet that "he even now remembers, with a sort of dismay, the sense of pride that took possession of him one day, when he was but nine years old, on contemplating a terrific tempest from the walls of the city, and hearing the miserably prosaic remarks of the other spectators on the aspect of the sea and the raging of the waves. Their

observations aroused a sense of disdainful pity in his mind, and he drew apart from them, recognising within himself, child as he was, the instinct of the infinite, revealed to him by the sight of the raging elements."

Meanwhile, another ocean, not less solemn and tremendous, was raging around the young spirit which thus identified itself with the tempest—the sea of Revolution, beating fiercely against a past which had founded the unity of France, but was incapable of aught further, and therefore doomed to perish. That sea swept over and nearly submerged the soil whose produce was parasitic honour and monopoly of caste; in order that, like Egypt after the inundation of the Nile, its sources of production might be renewed, and prepared for a second harvest.

But—like every violent impulse—overpassing its true limits, the Revolution severed the tradition it should have continued; and in order more completely to separate itself from the old formulæ of religion, it assailed the foundations of Religion itself—eternal Source of all the successive formulæ adopted by humanity. In the midst of the gigantic tumult; in a land shaken by fallen ruins, it was natural that the icy wing of Doubt should darken for a time the young and solitary soul thus educated to reflection by the unguided study of a mass of unselected reading. All the most powerful intellects have begun their career by doubt. Doubt descended upon the soul of Lamennais, but only to pass across it like cloud-shadows over the sea, leaving no trace of its passage. The conflict was brief, and the Empire found Lamennais sustained by an ardent religious faith, and thirsting for religious unity.

This was in 1804.

The relations of the Empire to religion are well known. The Empire professed its desire to protect religion; but it

was that protection of the powerful which stifles all liberty Education, the Priesthood, all things were required to succumb to the dominating Power. Religious worship became a branch of public administration—nothing more. This was the state of things as far as the Government was concerned; among the people, indifference had succeeded to negation. How could any real religion show itself among an abject stipendiary and servile clergy? The course of Lamennais was soon decided. His first war must be waged against the most glaring, urgent, and serious evil. The time was not yet ripe for him to seek out a new sphere; he withdrew into the ancient sphere. Born a Roman Catholic, he believed in the sovereignty of the faith—in the triumph of moral force. He regarded forms merely as the pledges, the symbols of the *idea*. In 1808, the year after the Spanish insurrection, he published his first work, *Reflections on the Condition of the Church in France*. It was alike a voice from Religion and a voice from the People, and as such, a simultaneous presage of the epoch to come; but the book itself was merely a violent and intolerant assault upon the disposition to negation displayed by the eighteenth century, and an appeal to the clergy to rekindle men's faith in the unseen and immaterial, by worthily representing that faith themselves. There was nothing in such language calculated to offend the existing Powers, yet, nevertheless, as if foreseeing the genius destined one day to fraternise with the people, the Imperial Police was alarmed, and ordered the sequestration of the work.

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Four years later Lamennais published, jointly with his brother, a second work, *On the Institution of Bishops*. Two years after this Napoleon fell, and Lamennais went to

Paris, where he dwelt in poverty till the return from Elba. It was then that, in order to escape persecution, he went to London. He remained there seven months, in great poverty and quite unknown. He returned to France after the battle of Waterloo, and shortly afterwards retired to his own Brittany. There, at thirty-four years of age, in 1817, he entered the priesthood at Rennes. In 1817 he published the first volume of his work *On Indifference in Matters of Religion.* This was his first experience and his first illusion.

His first illusion. The Revolution had persecuted Religion; the Empire had degraded it by making it dependent upon the State; the new Monarchy promised to restore it to honour. Founded upon the theory of *Right Divine*, and the Catholic principle of Authority, the interests of the Monarchy were in fact identical with those of the Church.

On all sides, save in the ranks of the Government, the tendency of society was towards opposition. It was so in the masses; the instinct of the age—indefinite, but nearly always true in direction—perceived that there was no real vitality left in the Church, and that every effort in its favour would be unavailing. It was so in the thinkers, almost all of whom belonged to the purely rationalistic and experimental school; and it was so in the ranks of *liberalism;* for the liberals of that day, incapable of grasping the conception of a progressive epoch, sought merely to *destroy*, and were followers of the superficial school of Voltaire.

Trembling at the recollection of the excesses of the Revolution; irritated by an indifference threatening the nation with intellectual torpor, and more perilous than ill-grounded hostility; convinced that the policy pursued

by the dominant school led only to incredulity, and had in it no germs of a future—Lamennais was driven to rest his hopes upon the existing Power. He cherished the idea of a monarchy so linked with Religion as to put an end to the existing moral anarchy, and reconstitute a vast and prolific unity. His work *On Indifference in Matters of Religion* is based on the notion of a chimerical alliance between the two authorities. The volumes, issued successively during the years 1820 to 1824, were, like his first, unjust and intolerant; violent in the political portions, and imperfect, though powerful, in the philosophical part. But a radical diversity of opinion should not make us forget the real merits of the work; its undeniable eloquence, and forcible expression of a real need—already forefelt by poetry—the necessity of re-establishing Tradition as the source of Authority; of breaking through the circle in which rationalism and materialism had enclosed the human mind, and of going forward under the double guidance of a religious faith and the conscience of Humanity. The author of the work on Indifference thus did good service, though unconsciously, to the cause of common progress, and we are beginning to perceive this at the present day. He restored Tradition to its rights—Tradition, without which no philosophy can exist; and he infused new life and gave new consecration to philosophy itself, by bringing it into contact with the social world; from which it had gradually been farther and farther withdrawn.

Led astray by his erroneous political opinions, Lamennais himself misconceived the bearing and consequences of the principles he propounded, and his view of Tradition was narrow and arbitrary; but he re-opened the true path, and that alone is sufficient to give a philosophical value to his work. The restitution of one vital element to human

intellectual progress is the principal characteristic of the book. It was to be expected that the details should soon be forgotten, and they were so. Moreover, to any one who studied his pages with attention, it was easy to perceive that the ties which still bound him to error were not likely long to resist the progressive character of his own genius. He allied himself to Monarchy, not so much because of any intrinsic merit he perceived therein, as because it presented an appearance of stability, from which he anticipated potency in good. At times it is evident that he himself regarded the alliance with suspicion; and his frequent reproofs of the Monarchy's lack of energy already betray that republican severity, which, at a later period, inspired his *Words of a Believer*, and which was destined to be fostered in him by the conduct of the Monarchy itself.

Partly from that spirit of distrust, natural to every merely temporal Power, partly from special circumstances, the Monarchy of the Restoration, which realised no advantages for the people, realised scarcely any benefit to the Catholic religion. The Church remained as servile as it had been under the Empire. "The Bishops," said the authors of *L'Avenir*, in a memorial addressed to Gregory XVI., "were allowed no official communication with the Holy See, and every Catholic priest who ventured to correspond with Rome ran the risk of punishment, possibly even of exile. There were no longer any provincial councils, diocesan synods, nor ecclesiastical tribunals for the maintenance of discipline. The Council of State was the sole judge in all matters concerning religion and conscience. Education was in the hands of a secular corporation, from which the Clergy were excluded: the spiritual direction of the Seminarists was circumscribed; and even that branch of instruction was subject, in the most important points, to

the civil authorities. The system of Evangelical Councils under a common direction was either forbidden by the law, or only granted by special authorisation, revocable at any time, and almost exclusively to a few feminine congregations. All, in short, that constituted the true life of religion was enervated or destroyed by the Imperial laws, which had been retained. The two celebrated ordinances of the 16th June 1828 are known to all men; ordinances which submit, *de facto*, all ecclesiastical schools to the supremacy of the civil authority; they limited the number of youths who should be allowed to prepare themselves by prayer and study for the service of God; they compelled them, at a certain age, to assume a special form of dress, and required of the teachers—teachers previously approved by the Government—an oath never to belong to any congregation unrecognised by the State."

Such was the method of the restored Monarchy, whose recent unaccountable habit it is to represent itself surrounded by an *auréole* of religious piety and Catholic fervour. It rendered that Church servile which it professed to revere, and undermined the foundations of religion by a hypocritical alliance which made it in some sort responsible for every political step injurious to the country.

Lamennais thought to remedy this double evil by a simple alteration of names. Joining the ministerial press, he wrote first in the *Conservateur* (the property of Chateaubriand), then in the *Drapeau Blanc*, then in the *Memorial Catholique;* but he nevertheless preserved an independent attitude towards the supreme power, and remained an opponent of the ministry Villèle, as he had been of the ministry Decazes. Little by little he abandoned the cause of Monarchy, and devoted himself exclusively to that of Religion. His dissatisfaction was still more openly evinced

in 1825, when he published his *Religion, considered in its Relation to Civil and Political Matters*, a book which was prosecuted by the Government, and for which he was condemned to a fine of thirty-six francs; and again in 1829, by the publication of another work, *On the Progress of Revolution and of the War against the Church*, in which he maintained the cause of Religious Independence against the Government.

The year 1830 arrived. A monarchy, the issue of fifteen years of purely negative and sceptical opposition, could not be more religious than the monarchy it overthrew. To organise power with firmness; to constitute it upon the basis of material interests by leading men's minds away from the path of ideas and of moral progress—to maintain a constant harmony between the inclinations of the Parliament and the personal designs of the King;—such was the programme of the monarchy of the *Citizen* King. It had no principles, no belief, and no affection for either Church or people. The last were repulsed, and the former was subjugated, as it had been under the previous monarchy. Lamennais therefore held the Empire, the Legitimate Monarchy, and the Monarchy of Louis Philippe, in like esteem.

Abroad, matters were even worse. In Italy, in Russia, and in Austria, the people were cruelly oppressed; and the Church was a mere instrument in the hands of unjust governments. The experience was complete: the illusion destroyed for ever. Lamennais, in disdainful anger, burst the bonds that so long had confined him. There yet remained to him one other element of authority to be tested in the service of righteousness—a power, great through its gigantic past, founded upon the moral force of the Word, and accustomed to declare itself the earthly representative

of Him who, above all others, had loved the people—the Papacy, Lamennais abandoned monarchy and turned to the Pope: despairing of all help from the lying protectors of the Church, he turned to the Church itself. It was the second period of his career; the second experience; the second illusion; and it was destined to be far briefer than the first.

I know that many have ranked Lamennais among the writers who follow after victory, no matter whence it spring. But they who so judge him understand nothing of the man, nor of his works. Lamennais was gifted by nature with far more of the temperament of the martyr than of the sectary of popular applause. He followed nothing but the truth; that which his own mind declared to him to be such. His writings, before the year 1830, already indicate the progressive nature of his mind. Now, to *progress* is not to *change;* to progress is to *live;* and the true life of genius consists precisely in its assimilation of a portion of the great social manifestations of its epoch. The insurrection of July did not seek the achievement of any new aim; it re-asserted former conquests, which were threatened by the Government; but, as is always the case in great popular movements, it gave rise to demonstrations which revealed the germs of a new life in the people, and proved that their antagonism to the faith was not an antagonism to the religious principle itself, but to the worn-out religious forms which had become hostile to progress. In France three days of popular sovereignty witnessed no single act of crime or disorder. Religion excited no hostility save when it appeared united with a monarchy rebellious to the will of the country: wherever it appeared alone it was treated with respect. And even the temporary enthusiasms excited by various attempts at creating a new religious faith, were really a proof

that men's minds were weary of mere individualism and doubt, and were thirsting for a new and potent unity. In other parts of the European continent—in Poland, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy—the popular movements were pure from all anarchy; and in some instances a religious feeling was associated with their national aspirations. There was in those revelations of the popular principle, in the prophetic thrill that then ran through the earth, a something divine. Lamennais understood it. "We live," he wrote, "in one of those epochs in which all things aspire towards renovation, to pass from one condition to another: none doubt this. Never was there a presentiment more intense, a conviction more universal. But according as we contemplate the future or the past—life or death—some amongst us hope, others fear. But, I repeat it, we all of us believe in an approaching change, in an inevitable great revolution. It will come then, and quickly. In vain they strive to maintain the things that were; in vain to retrace the course of time, or to perpetuate the existing anarchy; it is impossible. There is in the intimate nature of things a supreme, a fatal, and irrevocable necessity, stronger than every power. Of what avail are the pigmy hands stretched forth to arrest the progress of the human race? What can they accomplish? The people are impelled by an irresistible force. Whatever efforts are made, they will go whither they are called; and naught can arrest their course through the path of the ages, for it is upon that path that man is gradually prepared for eternity."

Wherefore, thought Lamennais — the mission of the Peoples, and their disposition towards order and justice, being recognised—wherefore should the Church refuse to regulate their movements, to preside over the action of this providential instinct of the multitudes?

Why should not Rome—which has already twice given unity to the world, under the Cæsars and under the Popes—utter a third Word, of import still more vast, and consequences still more fruitful? Why should not the priest, himself a son of the people, elevate the hand that bears the martyr's cross, and sanctify with his blessing the crusade of the oppressed, in the pilgrimage ordained for them by God towards liberty, equality, and love? And Lamennais devoted himself to the work with all the ardour which faith in a great principle awakens in a powerful intellect. He exhorted the clergy to renounce the miserable governmental stipend which impeded their liberty of action.

In September 1830 he founded *L'Avenir*, a daily publication bearing the epigraph *God and Liberty*, and founded at the same time a *General Agency* for the defence of religious liberty. In the first he propounded a doctrine which may be defined in his own words as destined "to destroy the reign of force; to substitute for it the reign of justice and charity, and thus realise among the members of the great human family a unity; in which each living of the life of all will both share and promote the well-being of all."

Such, he affirmed, was the spirit of the Gospel. By means of the *General Agency* he established an association for the purpose of obtaining a remedy for all violations of the liberty of the ecclesiastical ministry; of protecting the establishments of primary, secondary, and superior education against every arbitrary exercise of power; of maintaining the rights of every Frenchman to associate with others for purposes of prayer, of study, or of investigating the best means of serving the cause of religion, of civilisation, or of the poor. At a later period he proposed that a union should be formed among "all those who, in spite

of the massacre of Poland, the dismemberment of Belgium, and the conduct of the pretended liberal governments, persisted in the hope that the nations would one day be free, and in the determination to labour towards that aim."

These efforts were not without result. Local associations were established, the provincial papers disseminated his writings, and several schools were instituted. And, that naught of the earthly portion assigned by God to the just man—the praises of the good and the persecutions of the wicked—might be withheld from Lamennais,—the Government, alarmed, sequestrated *L'Avenir*, and summoned its director before their tribunals.*

But governmental persecutions could not subdue the mind of Lamennais, who, however, was destined to endure a far more terrible trial, the ruin of his last and noblest illusion; the proof that his heroic effort to restore life to the Rome of the Popes was too late; that Rome was a tomb, and the Papacy a corpse. That corpse, galvanised by diplomacy, arose to curse the daring priest who strove to recall it to the long-forgotten Gospel. The old man of the Vatican was no other than one more bad king among the many; the *Pope* had completed his moral suicide on the day on which he ceased to listen to the voice of progressive humanity. And now, precisely when Lamennais appealed to him to raise the banner of Christ and liberty, the Pope made King was calling upon Austria to destroy that banner in his states: while Lamennais garlanded the sepulchre wherein Poland lay for a while entombed, with all the flowers of Christian hope,—the Pope was cursing the liberty of Poland, and gratifying Russia by signing the servile Bull

* Lamennais' articles in *L'Avenir* have been collected by Dellaye, under the title of *Trois Mélanges*.

against the Polish bishops: while Lamennais was collecting 80,000 francs in the office of the *Avenir* in aid of the suffering Irish, the Pope-King was organising cohorts of ruffians to shed the blood of unarmed men and women in the streets of Cesena and Forlì. The hierarchy in Rome persecuted all who joined in the noble endeavours of Lamennais. In many dioceses the ordination of young men suspected of approving the doctrines of the *Avenir* was forbidden; professors and curates were suspended from the exercise of their sacred offices for the same reason. The self-styled *religious* press heaped calumny and outrage on the apostles of God and liberty; and the rumour of a papal condemnation was already spread, when Lamennais, loyal and devoted to the last, suspended the publication of *L'Avenir* and started for Rome, accompanied by two fellow-writers in that paper, in order to dispel the doubts of Gregory XVI., and explain his doctrines to him.

The book *Affaires de Rome* contains an exact and dispassionate account of that period; of the manner in which the three pilgrims were received; of the inefficacy of their efforts; of their departure; of the Encyclica of the 15th August 1832; of the resignation with which *L'Avenir* was suppressed and the *General Agency* dissolved; and of the persistence with which the Court of Rome nevertheless demanded a declaration of absolute, unlimited submission, in temporal as well as spiritual matters. The arts adopted constituted a positive system of moral torture; used against a man whose only guilt was having dreamed the redemption of Rome possible.*

They succeeded. In a moment of weakness Lamennais

* I will quote a single example. The Bishop of Rennes published a *confidential* letter, wrung from the brother of Lamennais, declaring his intention of separating from him.

signed in Paris, on the 2nd December 1833, his unlimited adhesion to the doctrine of the Encyclica; and retired, wounded to the heart, to the solitude of La Chenaye, about a league from Denan.

The second experience was complete—the last illusion vanished. How many youthful, ardent spirits have I not seen succumb beneath the first! How many powerful intellects, illumined at the outset by a ray of sacred truth, afterwards degraded by a single delusion, have profaned the flower of faith and hope by scepticism and the inertia of discouragement! At fifty-one years of age Lamennais had twice drained the cup of life to the last drop, and tasted naught but bitterness and impotence. And yet—the example is almost unique—he did not despair. In that small and slender form, which appears as if sustained solely by force of will, was the soul of a giant. God had impressed his Napoleonic brow with the sign of a mission, and that brow, furrowed by the papal and monarchical anathemæ, had bent for an instant, not before their fury, but beneath the weight of a divine idea, and only to be raised again more serene, irradiated with new youth, and crowned with the glories of the future.

Discouragement is but disenchanted egotism.

The thoughts that thronged across his spirit in those days of trial, and which were his salvation, are so beautifully and powerfully expressed in his *Affaires de Rome*, and appear to me so well calculated to strengthen all who are labouring under discouragement, that I cannot resist the temptation of quoting a portion of them here.

"Indifference, inertia, a naturally yielding disposition, and, above all, fear, paralysing fear; these are the causes which blunt or corrupt the weak conscience of the many, who wander hither and thither without any governing rule

of conduct, crying, *Peace, peace,* when there is no peace possible. They fear fatigue; they fear the struggle; they fear everything but that which is really fearful. I tell you that there is an eye whose glance descends like a curse from on high upon these men of little faith. Wherefore think they they were born? God has not placed man on earth as in his final dwelling; to waste his days in the slumber of indolence. Time passes them by, not like the light zephyr that caresses and refreshes the brow, but like the wind that now burns, now freezes; a tempest that drives their frail bark among arid rocks, beneath a stormy sky. Let them arise and watch—seize the oars, and bedew their brows with sweat. Man must do violence to his own nature; and bend his will before that immutable order of things which encompasses him above, below, in grief and misfortune. A duty, an absolute duty, governs him from the cradle upwards; growing with his growth and accompanying him to the tomb; a duty towards his brothers, as well as to himself; a duty towards his Country, towards Humanity, and above all, towards the Church; the Church, which, rightly understood, is but the home of the universal family; the great city wherein dwells Christ, at once Priest, King, and ruler of the world; calling upon the free, in every portion of the universe, to unite beneath the eternal law of intellect and love."

"And since he appeals to all, and all of us here below are soldiers enlisted to fight the good fight against evil; the battle of order against disorder; of light against darkness; since we are all of us given power, nay commanded, strictly commanded—from the supreme head of the society to which we belong, down to the obscurest Christian amongst us—we will bring our forces, however humble, in aid of the common aim.

"Was not the offering of the poor Shepherds accepted by the God who came into the world to save us with the same favour as the rich offerings of the Magi?

"No: our lips shall not be mute while the world is overshadowed by danger of death. We will not stand motionless like veiled statues on the shore of the torrent which threatens the foundations of the temple, detaching the stones one by one, and hurling them confusedly among the ruins of things doomed to pass away,—the hut of the peasant, the palace of the noble, and the throne of the king. Let all who have the things of eternity at heart arise with us! Let all who love God and man with all their heart and soul, and count all else as naught, join their voices and their hearts to ours. Why disturb ourselves if many refuse to unite in action with us? Shall we consume the energy of our hearts in idle tears for this? Faith demands action, not tears; it demands of us the power of sacrifice—sole origin of our salvation;—it seeks Christians capable of looking down upon the world from on high, and facing its fatigues without fear; Christians capable of saying, *We will die for this;* above all, Christians capable of saying, *We will live for this;* for he who dies for the world achieves but an individual triumph, and the triumph to which man should aspire is not his own, but that of the cause he has embraced."

The cause of Lamennais was, from that day forward, our own. His glance had for the second time penetrated that infinite, the image of which had been revealed to him when, a child of nine years old, he contemplated the tempest from the walls of his native city. It was the infinite of Humanity, the progressive interpreter of the law of God, which he, like Pascal, viewed as a single man who lives for ever and increases in knowledge for ever.

Humanity, initiator of its own advance; now through the medium of individuals, now of multitudes, according to time and events; but for ever bent, from experience to experience, from epoch to epoch, upon ascending the scale of perfectionment; on achieving the comprehension of its *aim* and of its duty; on the practical realisation of the divine *ideal* within it. It was the infinite of the people; of the universality of citizens, superior to all powers; of the universality of believers, superior to all the Popes; steadfast amidst the change of all things else; capable of improvement, while all else is doomed to corruption; sole depositary of the germs of a social and religious future; while individuals and castes cling to a past destined sooner or later to overwhelm them in its own ruin.

From that day the third period of Lamennais' existence began: the priest of the Romish Church became the priest of the Church Universal. The first expression, I might almost say effusion, of that new life was the powerful work entitled *Words of a Believer*, in the lyrical passages of which the three immortal sisters, Religion, Charity, and Poetry, are heard together in lovely harmony; a book which Gregory XVI., in his Encyclica of the 7th July 1834, called *libellum . . . . mole quidem exigeum pravitate tamen ingentum*, but which, translated into all languages, has everywhere carried consolation and promise to the souls of the sorrowing and oppressed.

To conclude: the space allotted me does not allow a critical examination of the *Affaires de Rome*, the *Livre du Peuple*, or the articles which appeared in the *Monde*, and were afterwards collected under the title of *Politics for the People;* works, all of them, posterior to the *Words of a Believer*, and marking the further progress made on the path pursued by Lamennais with the epoch. He is now

employed on a work* in many volumes, to which he intends to consign the fruits of his long studies and reflections. My purpose in these few lines has merely been to point out the direction in which he advances. I desire to show the link—hitherto unobserved—which unites his past with his present; and to enable the reader to understand how this man, often accused by those who either have not read him, or have read him superficially, of sudden and inexplicable changes, has, in fact, always pursued one sole sacred idea—the good of the people, through the medium of a religious belief. He has only changed the instruments by which he strove to realise that aim, whensoever those he wielded broke in his grasp through corruption or decay. And the series of these changes forms a summary of the experience of an entire epoch. If we had gained naught besides this from Lamennais, he would still have deserved our gratitude and affection. He has, so to speak, sacrificed himself for us; he has explored for us the path we have to tread, and pointed out to us where the abyss lies beneath the flowers; where the void is hidden by the semblance of life. He compelled the Monarchy to unmask, and the Papacy to utter its last word in the Encyclica of 1832. And when at length he came amongst us, crying, *There is neither hope nor life save in the people*, it was not merely the cry of a noble soul athirst for love—he brought with him demonstration incontrovertible.

"The path he pursues is that of Humanity. Long may he live to pursue it! His career is not completed. Where will he stop? cry those of his adversaries who would fain see him turn back. Onward, onward, for ever! cry those who comprehend his soul; for his life, like the life of

* *Esquisse d'une Philosophie.*

genius, like the life of the coming generations, consists in advancing

"Will the day ever come when his glance shall embrace the whole of the immense horizon spread before it? Of this we are certain, that from whatever altitude he may attempt it, he will measure its depth and breadth free alike from trouble or illusion; and if, in order to reach the promised land, it be needful to descend into the abyss, he will dare the descent, unrestrained by the world's vain clamour. For us, and for our century, he has initiated a crusade more glorious and more memorable in the sight of future generations than the crusade preached by St. Bernard; for not the sepulchre, but the legacy of Christ is the price of the conquest to which we are led by the Breton priest. The battle is no longer with Islam, but with the impiety of social life; we seek not the ransom of a few Christians, but of the vast majority of the human race."

Those beautiful lines are written by a woman, known to Europe under the name of George Sand.

[Mr. Mazzini wrote three different notices of the works of George Sand at different periods. The first appeared in the *Monthly Chronicle;* the second in the *People's Journal;* and the third formed the preface to a translation of the *Lettres d'un Voyageur*, by Miss Eliza Ashurst.

The important portions of these articles have been brought together in the following pages; but as the greater part of the earliest of them consisted of a critical refutation of the charges of immorality and "aversion to matrimony," brought against George Sand by certain clamorous critics of the day, who, although listened to with unmerited respect by the public during the rising of her star, have been utterly forgotten or disregarded since it attained its meridian, the translator has, by the author's desire, abstained from reprinting a defence of which the interest was merely temporary.]

BYRON AND GOETHE.

[A very incorrect translation of this criticism appeared in the *Monthly Chronicle* in 1839.]

I STOOD one day in a Swiss village at the foot of the Jura, and watched the coming of a storm. Heavy black clouds, their edges purpled by the setting sun, were rapidly covering the loveliest sky in Europe, save that of Italy. Thunder growled in the distance, and gusts of biting wind were driving huge drops of rain over the thirsty plain. Looking upwards, I beheld a large Alpine falcon, now rising, now sinking, as he floated bravely in the very midst of the storm, and I could almost fancy that he strove to battle with it. At every fresh peal of thunder, the noble bird bounded higher aloft, as if in answering defiance. I followed him with my eyes for a long time, until he disappeared in the east. On the ground, about fifty paces beneath me, stood a stork; perfectly tranquil and impassible in the midst of the warring elements. Twice or thrice she turned her head towards the quarter from whence the wind came, with an indescribable air of half indifferent curiosity; but at length she drew up one of her long sinewy legs, hid her head beneath her wing, and calmly composed herself to sleep.

I thought of Byron and Goethe; of the stormy sky that overhung both; of the tempest-tossed existence, the life-long struggle, of the one, and the calm of the other; and of the two mighty sources of poetry exhausted and closed by them.

Byron and Goethe—the two names that predominate, and, come what may, ever will predominate, over our every recollection of the fifty years that have passed away. They rule;—the master-minds, I might almost say the tyrants, of a whole period of poetry; brilliant, yet sad; glorious in youth and daring, yet cankered by the worm i' the bud, despair. They are the two Representative Poets of two great schools; and around them we are compelled to group all the lesser minds which contributed to render the era illustrious. The qualities which adorn and distinguish their works are to be found, although more thinly scattered, in other poets their contemporaries; still theirs are the names that involuntarily rise to our lips whenever we seek to characterise the tendencies of the age in which they lived. Their genius pursued different, even opposite routes; and yet very rarely do our thoughts turn to either without evoking the image of the other, as a sort of necessary complement to the first. The eyes of Europe were fixed upon the pair, as the spectators gaze on two mighty wrestlers in the same arena; and they, like noble and generous adversaries, admired, praised, and held out the hand to each other. Many poets have followed in their footsteps; none have been so popular. Others have found judges and critics who have appreciated them calmly and impartially; not so they: for them there have been only enthusiasts or enemies, wreaths or stones; and when they vanished into the vast night that envelops and transforms alike men and things—silence reigned around their tombs. Little by little, poetry had passed away from our world, and it seemed as if their last sigh had extinguished the sacred flame.

A reaction has now commenced; good, in so far as it reveals a desire for and promise of new life; evil, in so far

as it betrays narrow views, a tendency to injustice towards departed genius, and the absence of any fixed rule or principle to guide our appreciation of the past. Human judgment, like Luther's drunken peasant, when saved from falling on one side, too often topples over on the other. The reaction against Goethe, in his own country especially, which was courageously and justly begun by Menzel during his lifetime, has been carried to exaggeration since his death. Certain social opinions, to which I myself belong, but which, although founded on a sacred principle, should not be allowed to interfere with the impartiality of our judgment, have weighed heavily in the balance; and many young, ardent, and enthusiastic minds of our day have reiterated with Bönne that Goethe is the worst of despots; *the cancer of the German body.*

The English reaction against Byron—I do not speak of that mixture of cant and stupidity which denies the poet his place in Westminster Abbey, but of literary reaction—has shown itself still more unreasoning. I have met with adorers of Shelley who denied the poetic genius of Byron; others who seriously compared his poems with those of Sir Walter Scott. One very much overrated critic writes that "Byron makes man after his own image, and woman after his own heart; the one is a capricious tyrant, the other a yielding slave." The first forgot the verses in which their favourite hailed

> "The pilgrim of eternity, whose fame
> Over his living head like Heaven is bent;"*

the second, that after the appearance of *The Giaour* and *Childe Harold*, Sir Walter Scott renounced writing poetry.† The last forgot that while he was quietly writing criticisms,

* Adonais. † Lockhart.

Byron was dying for new-born liberty in Greece. All judged, too many in each country still judge, the two poets, Byron and Goethe, after an absolute type of the beautiful, the true, or the false, which they had formed in their own minds; without regard to the state of social relations as they were or are; without any true conception of the destiny or mission of Poetry, or of the law by which it, and every other artistic manifestation of human life, is governed.

There is no absolute type on earth: the absolute exists in the Divine Idea alone; the gradual comprehension of which man is destined to attain; although its complete realisation is impossible on earth; earthly life being but one stage of the eternal evolution of Life, manifested in thought and action; strengthened by all the achievements of the past, and advancing from age to age towards a less imperfect expression of that idea. Our earthly life is one phase of the eternal aspiration of the soul towards progress, which is our Law; ascending in increasing power and purity from the finite towards the infinite; from the real towards the ideal; from that which is, towards that which is to come. In the immense storehouse of the past evolutions of life constituted by universal tradition, and in the prophetic instinct brooding in the depths of the human soul, does poetry seek inspiration. It changes with the times, for it is their expression; it is transformed with society, for—consciously or unconsciously—it sings the lay of Humanity; although, according to the individual bias or circumstances of the singer, it assumes the hues of the present, or of the future in course of elaboration, and foreseen by the inspiration of genius. It sings now a dirge and now a cradle song; it initiates or sums up.

Byron and Goethe summed up. Was it a defect in them?

No; it was the law of the times, and yet society at the present day, twenty years after they have ceased to sing, assumes to condemn them for having been born too soon. Happy indeed are the poets whom God raises up at the commencement of an era, under the rays of the rising sun. A series of generations will lovingly repeat their verses, and attribute to them the new life which they did but foresee in the germ.

Byron and Goethe summed up. This is at once the philosophical explanation of their works, and the secret of their popularity. The spirit of an entire epoch of the European world became incarnate in them ere its decease, even as—in the political sphere—the spirit of Greece and Rome became incarnate before death in Cæsar and Alexander. They were the poetic expression of that principle, of which England was the economic, France the political, and Germany the philosophic expression: the last formula, effort, and result of a society founded on the principle of Individuality. That epoch, the mission of which had been, first through the labours of Greek philosophy, and afterwards through Christianity, to rehabilitate, emancipate, and develop individual man—appears to have concentrated in them, in Fichte, in Adam Smith, and in the French school *des droits de l'homme*, its whole energy and power, in order fully to represent and express all that it had achieved for mankind. It was much; but it was not the whole; and therefore it was doomed to pass away. The epoch of individuality was deemed near the goal; when lo! immense horizons were revealed; vast unknown lands in whose untrodden forests the principle of individuality was an insufficient guide. By the long and painful labours of that epoch, the human unknown quantity had been disengaged from the various quantities of different nature by which it

had been surrounded; but only to be left weak, isolated, and recoiling in terror from the solitude in which it stood. The political schools of the epoch had proclaimed the sole basis of civil organisation to be the right to liberty and equality (liberty for all), but they had encountered social anarchy by the way. The Philosophy of the Epoch had asserted the Sovereignty of the human *Ego*, and had ended in the mere adoration of *fact*, in *Hegelian* immobility. The Economy of the epoch imagined it had organised *free* competition, while it had but organised the oppression of the weak by the strong; of labour by capital; of poverty by wealth. The Poetry of the epoch had represented individuality in its every phase; had translated in sentiment what science had theoretically demonstrated; and it had encountered the void. But as society at last discovered that the destinies of the race were not contained in a mere problem of liberty, but rather in the harmonisation of liberty with association;—so did poetry discover that the life it had hitherto drawn from individuality alone was doomed to perish for want of aliment; and that its future existence depended on enlarging and transforming its sphere. Both society and poetry uttered a cry of despair: the death-agony of a form of society produced the agitation we have seen constantly increasing in Europe since 1815: the death-agony of a form of poetry evoked Byron and Goethe. I believe this point of view to be the only one that can lead us to a useful and impartial appreciation of these two great spirits.

There are two forms of Individuality; the expressions of its internal and external, or—as the Germans would say—of its subjective and objective life. Byron was the poet of the first, Goethe of the last. In Byron the *Ego* is revealed in all its pride of power, freedom, and desire, in the uncontrolled plenitude of all its faculties; inhaling existence at

every pore, eager to seize "the life of life." The world around him neither rules nor tempers him. The Byronian Ego aspires to rule *it;* but solely for dominion's sake, to exercise upon it the Titanic force of his will. Accurately speaking, he cannot be said to derive from it either colour, tone, or image; for it is *he* who colours; he who sings; he whose image is everywhere reflected and reproduced. His poetry emanates from his own soul; to be thence diffused upon things external; he holds his state in the centre of the Universe, and from thence projects the light radiating from the depths of his own mind; as scorching and intense as the concentrated solar ray. Hence that terrible unity which only the superficial reader could mistake for monotony.

Byron appears at the close of one epoch, and before the dawn of the other; in the midst of a community based upon an aristocracy which has outlived the vigour of its prime; surrounded by a Europe containing nothing grand, unless it be Napoleon on one side and Pitt on the other, genius degraded to minister to egotism; intellect bound to the service of the past. No seer exists to foretell the future: belief is extinct; there is only its pretence: prayer is no more; there is only a movement of the lips at a fixed day or hour, for the sake of the family, or what is called *the people:* love is no more; desire has taken its place; the holy warfare of ideas is abandoned; the conflict is that of interests. The worship of great thoughts has passed away. That which *is,* raises the tattered banner of some corpse-like traditions; that which *would be,* hoists only the standard of physical wants, of material appetites: around him are ruins, beyond him the desert; the horizon is a blank. A long cry of suffering and indignation bursts from the heart of Byron: he is answered by anathemas. He departs; he hurries through Europe in search of an ideal to

adore; he traverses it distracted, palpitating, like Mazeppa on the wild horse; borne onwards by a fierce desire; the wolves of envy and calumny follow in pursuit. He visits Greece; he visits Italy; if anywhere a lingering spark of the sacred fire, a ray of divine poetry, is preserved, it must be *there*. Nothing. A glorious past, a degraded present; none of life's poetry; no movement, save that of the sufferer turning on his couch to relieve his pain. Byron, from the solitude of his exile, turns his eyes again towards England; he sings. What does he sing? What springs from the mysterious and unique conception which rules, one would say in spite of himself, over all that escapes him in his sleepless vigil? The funeral hymn, the death-song, the epitaph of the aristocratic idea; we discovered it, we Continentalists; not his own countrymen. He takes his types from amongst those privileged by strength, beauty, and individual power. They are grand, poetical, heroic, but solitary; they hold no communion with the world around them, unless it be to rule over it; they defy alike the good and evil principle; they "will bend to neither." In life and in death "they stand upon *their* strength;" they resist every power, for their own is all their own; it was purchased by

> ——"Superior science—penance—daring—
> And length of watching—strength of mind—and skill
> In knowledge of our fathers."

Each of them is the personification, slightly modified, of a single type, a single idea—the *individual;* free, but nothing more than free; such as the epoch now closing has made him;—Faust, but without the compact which submits him to the enemy; for the heroes of Byron make no such compact. Cain kneels not to Arimanes; and Manfred, about to die, exclaims—

> "The mind, which is immortal, makes itself
> Requital for its good and evil thoughts—
> Is its own origin of ill, and end—
> And its own place and time, its innate sense,
> When stripped of this mortality, derives
> No colour from the fleeting things without,
> But is absorbed in sufferance or in joy;
> Born from the knowledge of its own desert."

They have no kindred: they live from their own life only: they repulse humanity, and regard the crowd with disdain. Each of them says: *I have faith in myself;* never, *I have faith in ourselves.* They all aspire to power or to happiness. The one and the other alike escape them; for they bear within them, untold, unacknowledged even to themselves, the presentiment of a life that mere liberty can never give them. Free they are; iron souls in iron frames, they climb the alps of the physical world as well as the alps of thought; still is their visage stamped with a gloomy and ineffaceable sadness; still is their soul—whether, as in Cain and Manfred, it plunge into the abyss of the infinite, "intoxicated with eternity," or scour the vast plain and boundless ocean with the Corsair and Giaour—haunted by a secret and sleepless dread. It seems as if they were doomed to drag the broken links of the chain they have burst asunder, rivetted to their feet. Not only in the petty society against which they rebel does their soul feel fettered and restrained; but even in the world of the spirit. Neither is it to the enmity of society that they succumb; but under the assaults of this nameless anguish; under the corroding action of potent faculties "inferior still to their desires and their conceptions;" under the deception that comes from within. What can they do with the liberty so painfully won? On whom, on what, expend the exuberant vitality within them? *They are alone;* this is the secret of their wretchedness and

impotence. They "thirst for good"—Cain has said it for them all—but cannot achieve it; for they have no mission, no belief, no comprehension even of the world around them. They have never realised the conception of *Humanity* in the multitudes that have preceded, surround, and will follow after them; never thought on their own place between the past and future; on the continuity of labour that unites all the generations into one Whole; on the common end and aim, only to be realised by the common effort; on the spiritual post-sepulchral life even on earth of the individual, through the thoughts he transmits to his fellows; and, it may be—when he lives devoted and dies in faith—through the guardian agency he is allowed to exercise over the loved ones left on earth.

Gifted with a liberty they know not how to use; with a power and energy they know not how to apply; with a life whose purpose and aim they comprehend not;—they drag through their useless and convulsed existence. Byron destroys them one after the other, as if he were the executioner of a sentence decreed in heaven. They fall unwept, like a withered leaf into the stream of time.

> "Nor earth nor sky shall yield a single tear,
> Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall fall,
> Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for all."

They die, as they have lived, alone; and a popular malediction hovers round their solitary tombs.

This, for those who can read with the soul's eyes, is what Byron sings; or rather what Humanity sings through him. The emptiness of the life and death of solitary individuality has never been so powerfully and efficaciously summed up as in the pages of Byron. The crowd do not comprehend him: they listen; fascinated for an instant; then repent, and avenge their momentary transport by calumniating and

insulting the poet. His intuition of the death of a form of society they call wounded self-love; his sorrow for *all* is misinterpreted as cowardly egotism. They credit not the traces of profound suffering revealed by his lineaments; they credit not the presentiment of a new life which from time to time escapes his trembling lips; they believe not in the despairing embrace in which he grasps the material universe—stars, lakes, alps, and sea—and identifies himself with it, and through it with God, of whom—to him at least—it is a symbol. They do, however, take careful count of some unhappy moments, in which, wearied out by the emptiness of life, he has raised—with remorse I am sure—the cup of ignoble pleasures to his lips, believing he might find forgetfulness there. How many times have not his accusers drained this cup, without redeeming the sin by a single virtue; without—I will not say bearing—but without having even the capacity of appreciating the burden which weighed on Byron! And did he not himself dash into fragments the ignoble cup, so soon as he beheld something worthy the devotion of his life?

Goethe—individuality in its objective life—having, like Byron, a sense of the falsehood and evil of the world around him—followed exactly the opposite path. After having—he, too, in his youth—uttered a cry of anguish in his Werther; after having laid bare the problem of the epoch in all its terrific nudity, in Faust; he thought he had done enough, and refused to occupy himself with its solution. It is possible that the impulse of rebellion against social wrong and evil which burst forth for an instant in Werther may long have held his soul in secret travail; but that he despaired of the task of reforming it as beyond his powers. He himself remarked in his later years, when commenting on the exclamation made by a Frenchman on first seeing

him: "*That is the face of a man who has suffered much;*" that he should rather have said: "*That is the face of a man who has struggled energetically;*" but of this there remains no trace in his works. Whilst Byron writhed and suffered under the sense of the wrong and evil around him, he attained the calm—I cannot say of victory—but of indifference. In Byron the man always ruled, and even at times overcame the artist: the man was completely lost in the artist in Goethe. In him there was no subjective life; no unity springing either from heart or head. Goethe is an intelligence that receives, elaborates, and reproduces the poetry affluent to him from all external objects: from all points of the circumference; to him as centre. He dwells aloft alone; a mighty Watcher in the midst of creation. His curious scrutiny investigates, with equal penetration and equal interest, the depths of the ocean and the calyx of the floweret. Whether he studies the rose exhaling its eastern perfume to the sky, or the ocean casting its countless wrecks upon the shore, the brow of the poet remains equally calm: to him they are but two forms of the beautiful; two subjects for art.

Goethe has been called a Pantheist. I know not in what sense critics apply this vague and often ill-understood word to him. There is a materialist pantheism and a spiritual pantheism; the pantheism of Spinosa and that of Giordano Bruno; of St. Paul; and of many others;—all different. But there is no poetic pantheism possible, save on the condition of embracing the whole world of phenomena in one unique conception: of feeling and comprehending the life of the universe in its divine unity. There is nothing of this in Goethe. There is pantheism in some parts of Wordsworth; in the third canto of Childe Harold, and in much of Shelley; but there is none in the most admirable

compositions of Goethe; wherein life, though admirably comprehended and reproduced *in each* of its *successive* manifestations, is never understood as a *whole*. Goethe is the poet of details, not of unity; of analysis, not of synthesis. None so able to investigate details; to set off and embellish minute and apparently trifling points; none throw so beautiful a light on separate parts; but the connecting link escapes him. His works resemble a magnificent encyclopædia, unclassified. He has felt *everything;* but he has never felt *the whole*. Happy in detecting a ray of the beautiful upon the humblest blade of grass gemmed with dew; happy in seizing the poetic elements of an incident the most prosaic in appearance;—he was incapable of tracing all to a common source, and recomposing the grand ascending scale in which, to quote a beautiful expression of Herder's, "every creature is a numerator of the grand denominator, Nature." How, indeed, should he comprehend these things, he who had no place in his works or in his poet's heart for Humanity, by the light of which conception *only* can the true worth of sublunary things be determined? "Religion and politics,"* said he, "are a troubled element for art. I have always kept myself aloof from them as much as possible." Questions of life and death for the millions were agitated around him; Germany re-echoed to the war-songs of Körner; Fichte, at the close of one of his lectures, seized his musket, and joined the volunteers who were hastening (alas! what have not the kings made of that magnificent outburst of nationality!) to fight the battles of their fatherland. The ancient soil of Germany thrilled beneath their tread; he, an artist, looked on unmoved; his heart knew no responsive throb to the emotion that shook his country; his genius, utterly passive, drew apart from the

* *Goethe and his Contemporaries.*

current that swept away entire races. He witnessed the French Revolution in all its terrible grandeur, and saw the old world crumble beneath its strokes; and while all the best and purest spirits of Germany, who had mistaken the death-agony of the old world for the birth-throes of a new, were wringing their hands at the spectacle of dissolution;—he saw in it only the subject of a farce. He beheld the glory and the fall of Napoleon; he witnessed the reaction of down-trodden nationalities—sublime prologue of the grand epopee of the Peoples destined sooner or later to be unfolded—and remained a cold spectator. He had neither learned to esteem men, to better them, nor even to suffer with them. If we except the beautiful type of Berlichingen, a poetic inspiration of his youth, man, as the creature of thought and action; the artificer of the future, so nobly sketched by Schiller in his dramas, has no representative in his works. He has carried something of this nonchalance even into the manner in which his heroes conceive love. Goethe's altar is spread with the choicest flowers, the most exquisite perfumes, the first fruits of nature; but the Priest is wanting. In his work of second creation—for it cannot be denied that such it was—he has gone through the vast circle of living and visible things; but stopped short before the seventh day. God withdrew from him before that time; and the creatures the Poet has evoked wander within the circle, dumb and prayerless; awaiting until the man shall come to give them a name, and appoint them to a destination.

No, Goethe is not the poet of Pantheism; he is a polytheist in his method as an artist; the pagan poet of modern times. His world is, above all things, the world of forms: a multipled Olympus. The Mosaic heaven and the Christian are veiled to him. Like the Pagans he parcels

out Nature into fragments, and makes of each a divinity; like them, he worships the sensuous rather than the ideal; he looks, touches, and listens far more than he feels. And what care and labour are bestowed upon the plastic portion of his art! what importance is given—I will not say to the objects themselves—but to the external representation of objects! Has he not somewhere said that "the Beautiful is the result of happy position?"*

Under this definition is concealed an entire system of poetic materialism, substituted for the worship of the ideal; involving a whole series of consequences, the logical result of which was to lead Goethe to indifference, that moral suicide of some of the noblest energies of genius. The absolute concentration of every faculty of observation on *each* of the objects to be represented, without relation to the *ensemble*; the entire avoidance of every influence likely to modify the view taken of that object, became in his hands one of the most effective means of art. The poet, in his eyes, was neither the rushing stream, a hundred times broken on its course, that it may carry fertility to the surrounding country; nor the brilliant flame, consuming itself in the light it sheds around while ascending to heaven; but rather the placid lake, reflecting alike the tranquil landscape and the thunder-cloud; its own surface the while unruffled even by the lightest breeze. A serene and passive calm, with the absolute clearness and distinctness of successive impressions, in each of which he was for the time wholly absorbed, are the peculiar characteristics of Goethe. "I allow the objects I desire to comprehend, *to act tranquilly upon* me," said he; "*I then observe the impression I have received from them*, and I endeavour to

* In the *Kunst und Alterthum*, I think.

render it faithfully." Goethe has here portrayed his every feature to perfection. He was in life such as Madame Von Armin proposed to represent him after death; a venerable old man, with a serene, almost radiant countenance; clothed in an antique robe, holding a lyre resting on his knees, and listening to the harmonies drawn from it either by the hand of a genius, or the breath of the winds. The last chords wafted his soul to the East; to the land of inactive contemplation. It was time: Europe had become too agitated for him.

Such were Byron and Goethe in their general characteristics; both great poets; very different, and yet, complete as is the contrast between them, and widely apart as are the paths they pursue, arriving at the same point. Life and death, character and poetry, everything is unlike in the two, and yet the one is the complement of the other. Both are the children of fatality—for it is especially at the close of epochs that the providential law which directs the generations, assumes towards individuals the semblance of fatality—and compelled by it unconsciously to work out a great mission. Goethe contemplates the world in parts, and delivers the impressions they make upon him, one by one, as occasion presents them. Byron looks upon the world from a single comprehensive point of view; from the height of which he modifies in his own soul the impressions produced by external objects, as they pass before him. Goethe successively absorbs his own individuality in each of the objects he reproduces. Byron stamps every object he portrays with his own individuality. To Goethe, Nature is the symphony; to Byron it is the prelude. She furnishes to the one the entire subject; to the other the occasion only of his verse. The one executes her harmonies; the other composes on the theme she has suggested. Goethe

better expresses lives; Byron life. The one is more vast; the other more deep. The first searches everywhere for the beautiful, and loves, above all things, harmony and repose; the other seeks the sublime, and adores action and force. Characters, such as Coriolanus or Luther, disturbed Goethe. I know not if, in his numerous pieces of criticism, he has ever spoken of Dante; but assuredly he must have shared the antipathy felt for him by Sir Walter Scott; and although he would undoubtedly have sufficiently respected his genius to admit him into his Pantheon, yet he would certainly have drawn a veil between his mental eye and the grand but sombre figure of the exiled seer, who dreamed of the future empire of the world for his country, and of the world's harmonious development under her guidance. Byron loved and drew inspiration from Dante. He also loved Washington and Franklin, and followed, with all the sympathies of a soul athirst for action, the meteor-like career of the greatest genius of action our age has produced, Napoleon; feeling indignant—perhaps mistakenly—that he did not die in the struggle.

When travelling in that second fatherland of all poetic souls—Italy—the poets still pursued divergent routes; the one experienced *sensations;* the other *emotions;* the one occupied himself especially with nature; the other with the greatness dead, the living wrongs, the human memories.*

And yet, notwithstanding all the contrasts, which I have only hinted at, but which might be far more elaborately

* The contrast between the two poets is nowhere more strikingly displayed than by the manner in which they were affected by the sight of Rome. In Goethe's *Elegies* and in his *Travels in Italy* we find the impressions of the artist only. He did not understand Rome. The eternal synthesis that, from the heights of the Capitol and St. Peter, is gradually unfolded in ever-widening circles, embracing first a nation and then Europe, as it will ultimately embrace Humanity, remained

displayed by extracts from their works; they arrived—Goethe, the poet of individuality in its objective life—at the egotism of indifference; Byron—the poet of individuality in its subjective life—at the egotism (I say it with regret, but *it*, too, is egotism) of despair: a double sentence upon the epoch which it was their mission to represent and to close!

Both of them—I am not speaking of their purely literary merits, incontestable and universally acknowledged—the one by the spirit of resistance that breathes through all his creations; the other by the spirit of sceptical irony that

unrevealed to him; he saw only the inner circle of paganism; the least prolific, as well as least indigenous. One might fancy that he caught a glimpse of it for an instant, when he wrote:—"History is read here far otherwise than in any other spot in the Universe; elsewhere we read it from without to within; here one seems to read it from within to without;" but if so, he soon lost sight of it again, and became absorbed in external nature. "Whether we halt or advance, we discover a landscape ever renewing itself in a thousand fashions. We have palaces and ruins; gardens and solitudes; the horizon lengthens in the distance, or suddenly contracts; huts and stables, columns and triumphal arches, all lie péle méle, and often so close that we might find room for all on the same sheet of paper."

At Rome Byron forgot passions, sorrows, his own individuality, all, in the presence of a great idea; witness this utterance of a soul born for devotedness:—

> "O Rome! my country! city of the soul!
> The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
> Lone mother of dead empires! and control
> In their shut breasts their petty misery."

When at last he came to a recollection of himself and his position, it was with a hope for the world (stanza 98) and a pardon for his enemies. From the 4th canto of Childe Harold, the daughter of Byron might learn more of the true spirit of her father than from all the reports she may have heard, and all the many volumes that have been written upon him.

pervades his works, and by the independent sovereignty attributed to art over all social relations—greatly aided the cause of intellectual emancipation, and awakened in men's minds the sentiment of liberty. Both of them—the one, directly, by the implacable war he waged against the vices and absurdities of the privileged classes, and indirectly, by investing his heroes with all the most brilliant qualities of the despot, and then dashing them to pieces as if in anger; —the other, by the poetic rehabilitation of forms the most modest, and objects the most insignificant, as well as by the importance attributed to details—combated aristocratic prejudices, and developed in men's minds the sentiment of equality. And having by their artistic excellence exhausted both forms of the poetry of individuality, they have completed the cycle of its poets; thereby reducing all followers in the same sphere to the subaltern position of imitators, and creating the necessity of a new order of poetry; teaching us to recognise a *want* where before we felt only a desire. Together they have laid an era in the tomb; covering it with a pall that none may lift; and, as if to proclaim its death to the young generation, the poetry of Goethe has written its history, while that of Byron has graven its epitaph.

And now farewell to Goethe; farewell to Byron! farewell to the sorrows that crush but sanctify not—to the poetic flame that illumines but warms not—to the ironical philosophy that dissects without reconstructing—to all poetry which, in an age where there is so much to *do*, teaches us inactive contemplation; or which, in a world where there is so much need of devotedness, would instil despair. Farewell to all types of power without an aim; to all personifications of the solitary individuality which seeks an aim to find it not, and knows not how to apply the life stirring within it;—to all egotistic joys and griefs—

"Bastards of the soul;
O'erweening slips of idleness: weeds;—no more—
Self-springing here and there from the rank soil;
O'erflowings of the lust of that same mind
Whose proper issue and determinate end,
When wedded to the love of things divine,
Is peace, complacency, and happiness."

Farewell, a long farewell to the past! The dawn of the future is announced to such as can read its signs, and we owe ourselves wholly to it.

The duality of the middle ages, after having struggled for centuries under the banners of Emperor and Pope; after having left its trace and borne its fruit in every branch of intellectual development; has reascended to heaven—its mission accomplished—in the twin flames of poesy called Goethe and Byron. Two hitherto distinct formulæ of life became incarnate in these two men. Byron is isolated man, representing only the internal aspect of life; Goethe isolated man, representing only the external.

Higher than these two incomplete existences; at the point of intersection between the two aspirations towards a heaven they were unable to reach, will be revealed the poetry of the future; of humanity; potent in new harmony, unity, and life.

But because, in our own day, we are beginning, though vaguely, to foresee this new social poetry, which will soothe the suffering soul by teaching it to rise towards God through Humanity; because we now stand on the threshold of a new epoch, which, but for them, we should not have reached;—shall we decry those who were unable to do more for us than cast their giant forms into the gulf that held us all doubting and dismayed on the other side? From the earliest times has genius been made the scapegoat of the generations. Society has never lacked men who

have contented themselves with reproaching the Chattertons of their day with not being patterns of self-devotion, instead of physical or moral suicides; without ever asking themselves whether they had, during their lifetime, endeavoured to place aught within the reach of such but doubt and destitution. I feel the necessity of protesting earnestly against the reaction set on foot by certain thinkers against the mighty-souled, which serves as a cloak for the cavilling spirit of mediocrity. There is something hard, repulsive, and ungrateful in the destructive instinct which so often forgets what *has* been done by the great men who preceded us, to demand of them merely an account of what more *might* have been done. Is the pillow of scepticism so soft to genius as to justify the conclusion that it is from egotism only that at times it rests its fevered brow thereon? Are we so free from the evil reflected in their verse as to have a right to condemn their memory? That evil was not introduced into the world by them. They saw it, felt it, respired it; it was around, about, on every side of them, and they were its greatest victims. How could they avoid reproducing it in their works? It is not by deposing Goethe or Byron that we shall destroy either sceptical or anarchical indifference amongst us. It is by becoming believers and organisers ourselves. If we are such, we need fear nothing. As is the public, so will be the poet. If we revere enthusiasm, the fatherland, and humanity; if our hearts are pure, and our souls steadfast and patient, the genius inspired to interpret our aspirations, and bear to heaven our ideas and our sufferings, will not be wanting. Let these statues stand. The noble monuments of feudal times create no desire to return to the days of serfdom.

But I shall be told, there are imitators. I know it too well; but what lasting influence can be exerted on social

life by those who have no real life of their own? They will but flutter in the void, so long as void there be. On the day when the *living* shall arise to take the place of the dead, they will vanish like ghosts at cock-crow. Shall we never be sufficiently firm in our own faith to dare to show fitting reverence for the grand typical figures of an anterior age? It would be idle to speak of social art at all, or of the comprehension of Humanity, if we could not raise altars to the new gods, without overthrowing the old. Those only should dare to utter the sacred name of Progress, whose souls possess intelligence enough to comprehend the past, and whose hearts possess sufficient poetic religion to reverence its greatness. The temple of the true believer is not the chapel of a sect; it is a vast Pantheon, in which the glorious images of Goethe and Byron will hold their honoured place, long after *Goethism* and *Byronism* shall have ceased to be.

When, purified alike from imitation and distrust, men learn to pay righteous reverence to the mighty fallen, I know not whether Goethe will obtain more of their admiration as an artist, but I am certain that Byron will inspire them with more love, both as man and poet—a love increased even by the fact of the great injustice hitherto shown to him. While Goethe held himself aloof from us, and from the height of his Olympian calm seemed to smile with disdain at our desires, our struggles, and our sufferings, —Byron wandered through the world, sad, gloomy, and unquiet; wounded, and bearing the arrow in the wound. Solitary and unfortunate in his infancy; unfortunate in his first love, and still more terribly so in his ill-advised marriage; attacked and calumniated both in his acts and intentions, without inquiry or defence; harassed by pecuniary difficulties; forced to quit his country, home, and

child; friendless—we have seen it too clearly since his death—pursued even on the Continent by a thousand absurd and infamous falsehoods, and by the cold malignity of a world that twisted even his sorrows into a crime; he yet, in the midst of inevitable reaction, preserved his love for his sister and his Ada; his compassion for misfortune; his fidelity to the affections of his childhood and youth, from Lord Clare to his old servant Murray, and his nurse Mary Gray. He was generous with his money to all whom he could help or serve, from his literary friends down to the wretched libeller Ashe. Though impelled by the temper of his genius, by the period in which he lived, and by that fatality of his mission to which I have alluded, towards a poetic Individualism, the inevitable incompleteness of which I have endeavoured to explain, he by no means set it up as a standard. That he presaged the future with the prevision of genius is proved by his definition of poetry in his journal—a definition hitherto misunderstood, but yet the best I know: "*Poetry is the feeling of a former world and of a future.*" Poet as he was, he preferred activity for good, to all that his art could do. Surrounded by slaves and their oppressors; a traveller in countries where even remembrance seemed extinct; never did he desert the cause of the peoples; never was he false to human sympathies. A witness of the progress of the Restoration, and the triumph of the principles of the Holy Alliance, he never swerved from his courageous opposition; he preserved and publicly proclaimed his faith in the rights of the peoples and in the final* triumph of liberty. The following

* "Yet, Freedom! yet, thy banner torn, but flying,
Streams, like the thunder-storm, *against* the wind:
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind.

passage from his journal is the very abstract of the law governing the efforts of the true party of progress at the present day: "Onwards! it is now the time to act; and what signifies self, if a single spark of that which would be worthy of the past* can be bequeathed unquenchably to the future? It is not one man, nor a million, but the *spirit* of liberty which must be spread. The waves which dash on the shore are, one by one, broken; but yet the *ocean* conquers nevertheless. It overwhelms the armada; it wears the rock; and if the Neptunians are to be believed, it has not only destroyed but made a world." At Naples, in the Romagna, wherever he saw a spark of noble life stirring, he was ready for any exertion; or danger, to blow it into a flame. He stigmatised baseness, hypocrisy, and injustice, whencesoever they sprang.

Thus lived Byron, ceaselessly tempest-tossed between the ills of the present and his yearnings after the future; often unequal; sometimes sceptical; but always suffering—often most so when he seemed to laugh;† and always loving, even when he seemed to curse.

Never did "the eternal spirit of the chainless mind" make a brighter apparition amongst us. He seems at times a transformation of that immortal Prometheus, of whom he has written so nobly; whose cry of agony, yet of futurity, sounded above the cradle of the European world;

The tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopped by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North,
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth."

* Written in Italy.

† "And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'Tis that I may not weep."

and whose grand and mysterious form, transfigured by time, reappears from age to age, between the entombment of one epoch and the accession of another; to wail forth the lament of genius, tortured by the presentiment of things it will not see realised in its time. Byron, too, had the "firm will" and the "deep sense;" he, too, made of his "death a victory." When he heard the cry of nationality and liberty burst forth in the land he had loved and sung in early youth, he broke his harp and set forth. While the *Christian* Powers were protocolising or worse—while the *Christian* nations were doling forth the alms of a few piles of ball in aid of the *Cross* struggling with the Crescent; he, the poet and pretended sceptic, hastened to throw his fortune, his genius, and his life at the feet of the first people that had arisen in the name of the nationality and liberty he loved.

I know no more beautiful symbol of the future destiny and mission of art than the death of Byron in Greece. The holy alliance of poetry with the cause of the peoples; the union—still so rare—of thought and action—which alone completes the human Word, and is destined to emancipate the world; the grand solidarity of all nations in the conquest of the rights ordained by God for all his children, and in the accomplishment of that mission for which alone such rights exist;—all that is now the religion and the hope of the party of progress throughout Europe, is gloriously typified in this image, which we, barbarians that we are, have already forgotten.

The day will come when Democracy will remember all that it owes to Byron. England too, will, I hope, one day remember the mission—so entirely English, yet hitherto overlooked by her—which Byron fulfilled on the Continent; the European rôle given by him to English literature, and

the appreciation and sympathy for England which he awakened amongst us.

Before he came, all that was known of English literature was the French translation of Shakespeare, and the anathema hurled by Voltaire against the "intoxicated barbarian." It is since Byron that we Continentalists have learned to study Shakespeare and other English writers. From him dates the sympathy of all the true-hearted amongst us for this land of liberty, whose true vocation he so worthily represented among the oppressed. He led the genius of Britain on a pilgrimage throughout all Europe.

England will one day feel how ill it is—not for Byron but for herself—that the foreigner who lands upon her shores should search in vain in that Temple which should be her national Pantheon, for the Poet beloved and admired by all the nations of Europe, and for whose death Greece and Italy wept as it had been that of the noblest of their own sons.

In these few pages—unfortunately very hasty—my aim has been, not so much to criticise either Goethe or Byron, for which both time and space are wanting, as to suggest, and if possible lead, English criticism upon a broader, more impartial, and more useful path than the one generally followed. Certain travellers of the eleventh century relate that they saw at Teneriffe a prodigiously lofty tree, which, from its immense extent of foliage, collected all the vapours of the atmosphere; to discharge them, when its branches were shaken, in a shower of pure and refreshing water. Genius is like this tree, and the mission of criticism should be to shake the branches. At the present day it more resembles a savage striving to hew down the noble tree to the roots.

ON THE GENIUS AND TENDENCY

OF THE

WRITINGS OF THOMAS CARLYLE.

(First published in the "British and Foreign Review," October 1843.)

I GLADLY take the opportunity offered by the publication of a new work by Mr. Carlyle, to express my opinion of this remarkable writer. I say my opinion of the writer—of his genius and tendencies, rather than of his books—of the idea which inspires him, rather than of the form with which he chooses to invest it. The latter, in truth, is of far less importance than the former. In this period of transition from doubt to admiration, this "sick and out of joint" time, old ideas die away, or weigh upon the heart like midnight dreams: young ones spring up to view, bright coloured and fresh with hope, but vague and incomplete, like the dreams of the morning. We stand wavering between a past whose life is extinct, and a future whose life has not yet begun; one while discouraged, at another animated by glorious presentiments; looking through the clouds for some star to guide us. One and all, like Herder, we demand of the instinct of our conscience, a great religious Thought which may rescue us from doubt, a social

faith which may save us from anarchy, a moral inspiration which may embody that faith in action, and keep us from idle contemplation. We ask this especially of those men in whom the unuttered sentiments and aspirations of the multitudes are concentrated and harmonised with the highest intuition of individual conscience. Their mission changes with the times. There are periods of a calm and normal activity, when the thinker is like the pure and serene star which illumines and sanctifies with its halo of light that *which is*. There are other times when genius must move devotedly onward before us, like the pillar of fire in the desert, and fathom for us the depths of that which *shall be*. Such are our times: we cannot at the present day merely amuse ourselves with being *artists*, playing with sounds or forms, delighting only our senses, instead of pondering some germ of thought which may serve us. We are scarcely disposed, living in the nineteenth century, to act like that people mentioned by Herodotus, who beguiled eighteen years of famine by playing with dice and tennis-balls.

The writer of whom I have now to speak, by the nature of his labours and the direction of his genius, authorises the examination I propose to make. He is melancholy and grave: he early felt the evil which is now preying upon the world, and from the outset of his career he proclaimed it loudly and courageously.

"Call ye that a society," he exclaims, in one of his first publications, "where there is no longer any social idea extant, not so much as the idea of a common home, but only that of a common over-crowded lodging-house? where each, isolated, regardless of his neighbour, turned against his neighbour, clutches what he can get, and cries '*Mine!*' and calls it Peace, because in the cut-purse and

cut-throat scramble, no steel knives, but only a far cunninger sort can be employed—where friendship, communion, has become an incredible tradition, and your holiest sacramental supper is a smoking tavern dinner, with cook for evangelist? where your priest has no tongue but for plate-licking, and your high guides and governors cannot guide; but on all hands hear it passionately proclaimed, *Laissez-faire!* Leave us alone of your guidance—such light is darker than darkness—eat your wages and sleep."*

Mr. Carlyle, in writing these lines, was conscious that he engaged himself to seek a remedy for the evil, nor has he shrunk from the task. All that he has since written bears more and more evidently the stamp of a high purpose. In his *Chartism* he attempted to grapple with the social question; in all his writings, whatever be their subjects, he has touched upon it in some one of its aspects. Art is to him but as a means. In his vocation as a writer he fills the tribune of an apostle, and it is here that we must judge him.

A multitude of listeners has gathered around him: and this is the first fact to establish, for it speaks both in favour of the writer and of the public whom he has won over. Since the day when, alone and uncomprehended, he penned the words which we have quoted, Teufelsdröck has made proselytes. The "mad hopes," expressed, with an allowable consciousness of the power which stirred with him, in the last chapter of *Sartor Resartus*, has been largely realised. The philosophy of clothes—thanks to the good and bad conduct of the two Dandiacal and Drudge sects—has made some progress. Signs have appeared; they multiply daily on the horizon. The diameter of the two

* *Sartor Resartus*, book iii., chap. 6.

"bottomless, boiling whirlpools,"* has widened and widened, as they approach each other in a threatening manner; and many readers who commenced with a smile of pity, or scorn of the unintelligible and tiresome jargon, the insinuations, half-ironical, half-wild, of the dark dreamer, now look into his pages with the perseverance of the monks of Mount Athos, to see whether they cannot there discover the "great thought," of which they themselves begin to feel the want. They now admire as much as they once scorned,—they admire even when they cannot understand.

Be it so, for this too is good: it is good to see that the great social question, which not long ago was ridiculed, begins to exercise a kind of fascination upon the public mind; to find that even those whose own powers are not adequate to the task, acknowledge the necessity of some solution of the spinx-like enigma which the times present. It is good to see, by a new example, that neither ignorant levity nor materialist indifference can long suppress the divine rights of intellect.

There are differences between Mr. Carlyle's manner of viewing things and my own, which I have to premise; but I will not do this without first avowing his incontestable merits—merits which at the present day are as important as they are rare, which in him are so elevated as to command the respect and admiration even of those who rank under another standard, and the sympathy and gratitude of those who, like myself, are in the main upon the same side, and who differ only respecting the choice of means and the road to pursue.

Above all, I would note the sincerity of the writer. What he writes, he not only thinks, but feels. He may deceive himself—he cannot deceive us; for what he says,

* *Sartor Resartus*, book iii., chap. 10.

even when it is not the truth, is yet *true;*—*his* individuality, *his* errors, *his* incomplete view of things—realities, and not nonentities—the truth limited, I might say, for error springing from sincerity in a high intellect is no other than such. He seeks good with conscientious zeal, not from a love of fame, not even from the gratification of the discovery; his motive is the love of his fellow-men, a deep and active feeling of duty, for he believes this to be the mission of man upon earth. He writes a book as he would do a good action. Yet more, not only does he feel all he writes, but he writes nearly all that he feels. Whatever is in his thoughts and has not yet been put on paper, we may be sure will sooner or later appear. He may preach the merit of "holding one's tongue;"—to those, in truth, who do not agree with him, are such words addressed—but the "talent of silence" is not his; if sometimes he pretend to reverence it, it is, as I may say, platonically, to prevent others speaking ill. But in minds constituted like his, compression of thought is impossible; it must expand, and every prolonged effort made to restrain it will only render the explosion the more violent. Mr. Carlyle is no homœopathist; he never administers remedies for evil in infinitesimal doses; he never pollutes the sacredness of thought by outward concession or compromise with error. Like Luther, he hurls his inkstand at the head of the devil, under whatever form he shows himself, without looking to the consequences; but he does it with such sincerity, such *naïveté* and good-will, that the devil himself could not be displeased at it, were the moment not critical, and every blow of the inkstand a serious thing to him.

I know no English writer who has during the last ten years so vigorously attacked the half-gothic, half-pagan edifice which still imprisons the free flight of the spirit, no

one who has thrown among a public much addicted to routine and formalism, so many bold negations, so many religious and social views, novel and contrary to any existing ones, yet no one who excites less of hostility and animadversion. There is generally so much candour and impartiality in his attacks, so much conviction in his thoughts, so entire an absence of egotism, that we are compelled to listen to what, if uttered by any other man with anger or contempt, would excite a storm of opposition. There is never anger in the language of Mr. Carlyle; disdain he has, but without bitterness, and when it gleams across his pages it speedily disappears under a smile of sorrow and of pity, the rainbow after a storm. He condemns because there are things which neither heaven nor earth can justify; but his reader always feels that it is a painful duty he fulfils. When he says to a creed or to an institution, "You are rotten—begone!" he has always some good word upon what it has achieved in the past, upon its utility, sometimes even upon its inutility. He never buries without an epitaph—"*Valeat quantum valere protest.*" Take as an instance, above all, his *History of the French Revolution.*

I place in the second rank his tendencies toward the ideal —that which I shall call, for want of a better word, his spiritualism. He is the most ardent and powerful combatant of our day in that reaction, which is slowly working against the strong materialism that for a century and a half has maintained a progressive usurpation, one while in the writings of Locke, Bolingbroke, or Pope, at another in those of Smith and Bentham, and has tended, by its doctrines of self-interest and material well-being, to the enthronement of selfishness in men's hearts. All the movement of industrial civilization, which has overflooded intellectual and moral civilisation, has not deafened him.

Amidst the noise of machinery, wheels, and steam-engines, he has been able to distinguish the stifled plaint of the prisoned spirit, the sigh of millions, in whose hearts the voice of God whispers at times, "*Be men!*" and the voice of society too often cries, "In the name of Production, be brutes!" and he is come, with a small number of chosen spirits, to be their interpreter. He declares that all the bustle of matter and of industry in movement does not weigh against the calm, gentle, and divine whisper that speaks from the depths of a virtuous soul, even when found in the lowest grade of mere machine-tenders; that the producer, not the production, should form the chief object of social institutions; that the human soul, not the body, should be the starting-point of all our labours, since the body without the soul is but a carcase; whilst the soul, wherever it is found free and holy, is sure to mould for itself such a body as its wants and vocation require.

In all his writings, in *Sartor Resartus*, in his *Lectures*, in his *Essays* especially (some of which appear to me to be among the best of Mr. Carlyle's writings), the standard of the ideal and divine is boldly unfurled. He seeks to abolish nothing, but he desires this truth to be acknowledged and proclaimed, that it is the invisible which governs the visible, the spiritual life which informs the exterior; he desires that the universe should appear, not as a vast workshop of material production (whether its tendency be to centre, as at the present day, in the hands of a few, or to spread, according to the utopian schemes of Owen or Fourier, among the whole community), but as a temple, in which man, sanctified by suffering and toil, studies the infinite in the finite, and walks on toward his object in faith and in hope, with eyes turned constantly toward heaven. Toward this heaven the thought of the writer

soars continually with fervour, sometimes even with a kind of despair. It is a reflection of this heaven, the image of the sun in the dew-drops, which he seeks in terrestrial objects. He penetrates the symbol to arrive at the idea: he seeks God through visible forms, the soul through the external manifestations of its activity. We feel that wherever he found the first suppressed, the second extinguished, he would see nothing left in the world but idolatry, falsehood, things to despise and to destroy. For him, as for all who have loved, and suffered, and have not lost in the selfish pursuit of material gratifications the divine sense which makes us men—it is a profound truth that "we live, we walk, and we are in God." Hence his reverence for nature,—hence the universality of his sympathies, prompt to seize the poetical side in all things,—hence, above all, his notion of human life, devoted to the pursuit of duty, and not to that of happiness,—"the worship of sorrow and renunciation," such as he has given it in his chapter "The Everlasting Yea" of *Sartor Resartus*, and such as comes out in all his works. There are, no doubt, many who will term this a treasure; there are others who will call it utopian. I would, however, remind the first that it is not enough to stammer out the sacred words "sacrifice and duty," and to inscribe the name of God upon the porch of the temple, in order to render the worship real and fruitful: the theory of individual well-being rules incontestibly at the present day, I will not say all our political *parties* (this it does more than enough, of course), but all our social *doctrines*, and attaches us all unconsciously to materialism. I would likewise remind the second, that although we have pretended for the last fifty years to organise everything with a view to the interests, that is to say, the happiness, of society,

we yet see before us a society harassed by ills, by misery, and complaints, in eighteen-twentieths of its members. Is it, then, just, to treat the contrary practice as utopian?

Looking around me, I affirm that the spiritual view which Mr. Carlyle takes of human life is the only good, the only essentially religious one,—and one of extreme importance, here especially, where the very men who battle the most boldly for social progress are led away by degrees to neglect the development of what is highest, holiest, and most imperishable in man, and to devote themselves to the pursuit of what they call the useful. There is nothing useful but the good, and that which it produces; usefulness is a consequence to be foreseen, not a principle to be invoked. The theory which gives to life, as its basis, a *right* to well-being, which places the object of life in the search after happiness, can only lead vulgar minds to egotism, noble and powerful minds to deception, to doubt, and to despair. It may indeed destroy a given evil, but can never establish the good; it may dissolve, but cannot re-unite. Whatever name it assumes, in whatever Utopia it may cradle itself, it will invariably terminate in organising war,—war between the governors and the governed in politics, disguised under the name of a system of guarantees, of balance, or of parliamentary majorities—war between individuals in economy, under the name of free competition (*free* competition between those who have nothing and who work for their livelihood, and those who have much and seek a superfluity!)—war, or moral anarchy, by effacing all social faith before the absolute independence of individual opinion. This is nearly the present state of things in the world—a state from which we must at any cost escape. We must come to the conviction, in this as in all other cases, that there exist no rights but those which result from fulfilment

of duty; that our concernment here below is not to be happy, but to become better: that there is no other object in human life than to discover, by collective effort, and to execute, every one for himself, the law of God, without regarding individual results. Mr. Carlyle is an eloquent advocate of this doctrine, and it is this which creates his power, for there are, thank God, good instincts enough at the bottom of our hearts to make us render homage to the truth, although failing in its practice, when it finds among us a pure-minded and sincere interpreter.

I place in the third rank our author's cosmopolitan tendencies,—*humanitarian* I would say, if the word were in use; for cosmopolitanism has at the present day come to indicate indifference, rather than universality of sympathies. He well knows that there is a holy land, in which, under whatever latitude they may be born, men are brethren. He seeks among his equals in intelligence, not the Englishman, the Italian, the German, but the man: he adores, not the god of one sect, of one period, or of one people, but God; and as the reflex of God upon earth, the beautiful, the noble, the great, wherever he finds it; knowing well, that whencesoever it beams, it is, or will be, sooner or later, for all. His points of view are always elevated; his horizon always extends beyond the limits of country; his criticism is never stamped with that spirit of nationalism (I do not say of nationality, a thing sacred with us all), which is only too much at work amongst us, and which retards the progress of our intellectual life by isolating it from the universal life, palpitating among the millions of our brethren abroad. He has attached himself earnestly to the literature most endued with this assimilating power, and has revealed it to us. His Essays on Schiller, on Goethe, on Jean Paul,

on Werner, his excellent translations from the German, will remain a testimony of the naturalisation which he has given to German literature amongst us; as the beautiful pages of his lectures on Dante, and some of those which he has devoted to the French writers, testify the universality of that tendency which I distinguish here as forming the third characteristic of his mind.

To descend to qualities purely literary, Mr. Carlyle is moreover a powerful artist. Since the appearance of his work on the French Revolution, no one can any longer dispute his claim to this title. The brilliant faculties which were revealed in flashes in his previous writings burst out in this work, and it is only a very exalted view of the actual duties of the historian that will enable us to judge it coldly and to remark its defects. He carries his reader along, he fascinates him. Powerful in imagination, which is apt to discover the sympathetic side of things and to seize its salient point—expressing himself in an original style, which, though it often appear whimsical, is yet the true expression of the man, and perfectly conveys his thought—Mr. Carlyle rarely fails of his effect. Gifted with that objectivity of which Goethe has in recent times given us the highest model, he so identifies himself with the things, events, or men which he exhibits, that in his portraits and his descriptions he attains a rare lucidness of outline, force of colouring, and graphic precision; they are not imitations, but reproductions. And yet he never loses, in the detail, the *characteristic*, the unity of the object, being, or idea which he wishes to exhibit. He works in the manner of a master, indicating by certain touches, firm, deep, and decisive, the general physiognomy of the object, concentrating the effort of his labour and the intensity of his light upon the central point, or that which

he deems such, and placing this so well in relief that we cannot forget it. *Humour*, or the faculty of setting off small things, after the manner of Jean Paul, abounds in his writings. Beside the principal idea, secondary ideas meet us at every step, often new and important in themselves, particles of gold scattered upon the shore by the broad wave of the writer's thought. His epithets, although numerous, are seldom without force; they mark a progression in the development of the idea or the qualities of the object. His diction may have faults; of these I shall not treat here, but I may remark that the charge of obscurity so commonly brought against all thinkers endowed with originality, is, generally speaking, only a declaration of incompetence to comprehend or to judge of their ideas. Moreover, his style is, as I have said, the spontaneous expression of his genius, the aptest form to symbolise his thought, the body shaped by the soul. I would not that it were otherwise; what I require in all things is, *the true man in his unity and completeness.*

Thus frank, honest, and powerful, "*ohne Hast, aber ohne Rast,*" Mr. Carlyle pursues his career: may he long continue it, and reap the honours which he merits,—not for himself so much as for the gratification of those who esteem him, of all those who would see the relations between intelligence and the public drawn more and more close; and may he thus, in his pilgrimage here, attain the consciousness that the seed which he has scattered has not been given to the wind.

I have stated sufficiently at large what is absolutely good in the writer I have undertaken to estimate, to allow me freely to fulfil a second duty, that of declaring what appears to me to render this noble talent incomplete, and to vitiate his work by keeping it behind what the

times already require elsewhere, and will soon require here.

It is a very important question (too important for the few pages I can here devote to it) that I must now glance at: upon it depends the question of the duty imposed at the present time on the whole world. It appears to me that the tendency of Mr. Carlyle's genius, hitherto appreciated from only one point of view,—Tory, Whig, or sectarian,—well deserves that we should seek to appreciate it from the point of view of the future, from which all the present transitionary parties are excluded.

There is but one defect in Mr. Carlyle, in my opinion, but that one is vital: it influences all he does, it determines all his views; for logic and system rule the intellect even when the latter pretends to rise the most against them. I refer to his view of the collective intelligence of our times.

That which rules the period which is now commencing, in all its manifestations; that which makes every one at the present day complain, and seek good as well as bad remedies—that which everywhere tends to substitute, in politics, democracy for governments founded upon privilege —in social economy, association for unlimited competition —in religion, the spirit of universal tradition for the solitary inspiration of the conscience—is the work of an *idea* which not only alters the aim but changes the starting-point of human activity; it is the *collective* thought seeking to supplant the individual thought in the social organism; the spirit of *Humanity visibly* substituting itself (for it has been always silently and unperceived at work) for the spirit of *man*.

In the past, we studied one by one the small leaves of the calix, the petals of the corolla; at the present day our attention is turned to the full expansion of the flower.

Two thousand years, from the earliest times of Greece down to the latest work of pagan Rome, worked out Individuality under one of its phases; eighteen centuries have enlightened and developed it under the other. At the present day other horizons reveal themselves—we leave the individual for the species. The instrument is organised; we seek for it a law of activity and an outward object. From the point of view of the individual we have gained the idea of right; we have worked out (were it only in thought) liberty and equality—the two great guarantees of all personality: we proceed further—we stammer out the words Duty—that is to say, something which can only be derived from the general law—and *association*—that is to say, something which requires a common object, a common belief. The prolonged plaint of millions crushed beneath the wheels of competition has warned us that freedom of labour does not suffice to render industry what it ought to be, the source of material life to the state in all its members: the intellectual anarchy to which we are a prey has shown us that liberty of conscience does not suffice to render religion the source of moral life to the state in all its members.

We have begun to suspect, not only that there is upon the earth something greater, more holy, more divine than the individual—namely, Humanity—the collective Being always living, learning, advancing toward God, of which we are but the instruments; but that it is alone from the summit of this collective idea, from the conception of the Universal Mind, "of which," as Emerson says, "each individual man is one more incarnation," that we can derive our mission, the rule of our life, the aim of our societies. We labour at this at the present day. It signifies little that our first essays are strange aberrations: it signifies

little that the doctrines of St. Simon, of Owen, of Fourier, and others who have risen, or shall arise, may be condemned to ridicule. That which is important is the idea common to all these doctrines, and the breath of which has rendered them fruitful; it is the object which they all instinctively propose, the starting-point they take.

Half-a-century ago, all the boldest and most innovating theories sought in the organisation of Societies guarantees for free individual action; the State was in their eyes only the power of *all* directed to the support of the rights of *each;* at the present day, the most timid reformers start with a social principle to define the part of the individual,—with the admission of a general law, of which they seek the best interpreter and best application. What, in the political world, are all these tendencies to centralisation, to universal suffrage, to the annihilation of castes? Whence arise, in the religious world, all these discontents, all this retrogression toward the past, all these aspirations toward the future, confused and uncertain, it is true, but wide, tolerant, and reconciliatory of creeds at present opposed? Why is history, which in old times was satisfied with relating the deeds of princes or of ruling bodies of men, directed at the present day so much to the masses, and why does it feel the necessity of descending from the summits of society to its base? And what means that word Progress, which though understood in a thousand different ways, is yet found on every lip, and gradually becomes from day to day the watchword of all labours?

We thirst for unity: we seek it in a new and larger expression of mutual responsibility of all men towards each other,—the indissoluble *copartnery* of all generations and all individuals in the human race. We begin to comprehend those beautiful words of St. Paul (Romans xii. 5).

"We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." We seek the harmony and meaning of the worth of individuals in a comprehensive view of the collective whole. Such is the tendency of the present times, and whosoever does not labour in accordance with it, necessarily remains behind.

Mr. Carlyle comprehends only the *individual;* the true sense of the unity of the human race escapes him. He sympathises with all men, but it is with the separate life of each, and not with their collective life. He readily looks at every man as the representative, the incarnation in a manner, of an idea: he does not believe in a "supreme idea, represented progressively by the development of mankind taken as a whole. He feels forcibly (rather indeed by the instinct of his heart, which revolts at actual evil, than by a clear conception of that which truly constitutes *life*) the want of a bond between the men who are around him; he does not feel sufficiently the existence of the greater bond between the generations past, present, and future. The great religious idea, *the continued development of Humanity by a collective labour, according to an educational plan designed by Providence*, forefelt from age to age by a few rare intellects, and proclaimed in the last fifty years by the greatest European thinkers, finds but a feeble echo, or rather no echo at all, in his soul. Progressive from an impulse of feeling, he shrinks back from the idea as soon as he sees it stated explicitly and systematically; and such expressions as "the progress of the species," and "perfectibility" never drop from his pen unaccompanied by a taint of irony, which I confess is to me inexplicable. He seems to regard the human race rather as an aggregate of similar individuals, distinct powers in juxtaposition, than as an association of labourers, distributed in groups, and

impelled on different paths toward one single object. The idea of the nation itself, the Fatherland,—the second collective existence, less vast, but still for many centuries not less sacred than humanity—vanishes, or is modified under his hand; it is no longer the sign of our portion of labour in the common work, the workshop in which God has placed the instruments of labour to fulfil the mission most within our reach; it is no longer the symbol of a thought, of a special vocation to be followed indicated by the tradition of the race, by the affinity of tendencies, by the unity of language, by the character of localities, etc.; it is something reduced, as much as possible, to the proportions of the *individual.* The nationality of Italy in his eyes is the glory of having produced Dante and Christopher Columbus; the nationality of Germany that of having given birth to Luther, to Goethe, and to others. The shadow thrown by these gigantic men appears to eclipse from his view every trace of the national thought of which these men were only the interpreters or prophets, and of the people, who alone are its depositary. All generalisation is so repugnant to Mr. Carlyle that he strikes at the root of the error, as he deems it, by declaring that the history of the world is fundamentally nothing more than the biography of great men (*Lectures*). This is to plead, distinctly enough, against the idea which rules the movement of the times.*

In the name of the democratic spirit of the age, I protest against such views.

* This is the essence of Mr. Carlyle's ideas, as they appear to me to be deducible from the body of his views and opinions and the general spirit which breathes in his works. Of course we meet here and there with passages in opposition to this spirit, and in accordance with that of the age. It is impossible for a writer of Mr. Carlyle's stamp to avoid this; but I do not think I can be accused, if my remarks are read with attention, of unfaithfulness in the material point.

History is not the biography of great men; the history of mankind is the history of the progressive religion of mankind, and of the translation by symbols, or external actions, of that religion.

The great men of the earth are but the marking-stones on the road to humanity: they are the priests of its religion. What priest is equal in the balance to the whole religion of which he is a minister? There is yet something greater, more divinely mysterious, than all the great men —and that is the earth which bears them, the human race which includes them, the thought of God which stirs within them, and which the whole human race collectively can alone accomplish. Disown not, then, the common mother for the sake of certain of her children, however privileged they may be; for at the same time that you disown her, you will lose the true comprehension of these rare men whom you admire. Genius is like the flower which draws one-half of its life from the moisture that circulates in the earth, and inhales the other half from the atmosphere. The inspiration of genius belongs one-half to heaven, the other to the crowd of common mortals from whose life it springs. No one can rightly appreciate or understand it without an earnest study of the medium in which it lives.

I cannot, however, here attempt to establish any positive ideas respecting the vocation of our epoch, or the doctrine of collective progress which appears to me to characterise it; perhaps I may one day take an occasion to trace the history of this doctrine, which, treated as it still is with neglect, reckons nevertheless among its followers men who bore the names of Dante, of Bacon, and of Leibnitz. At present I can only point out the existence of the contrary doctrine in the writings of Mr. Carlyle; and the consequences to which, in my opinion, it leads him.

It is evident that, of the two criteria of certainty, individual conscience and universal tradition, between which mankind has hitherto perpetually fluctuated; and the reconcilement of which appears to me to constitute the only means we possess of recognising truth, Mr. Carlyle adopts one alone—the first. He rejects, or at least wholly neglects, the other. All his views are the logical consequences of this choice. Individuality being everything, it must *unconsciously* reach Truth. The voice of God is heard in the intuition, in the instincts of the soul; to separate the *Ego* from every human external agency, and to offer it in native purity to the breath of inspiration from above—this is to prepare a temple to God. God and the individual man—Mr. Carlyle sees no other object in the world.

But how can the solitary individual approach God, unless by transport, by enthusiasm, by the unpremeditated upward flight of the spirit, unshackled by method or calculation? Hence arises all Mr. Carlyle's antipathy to the labours of philosophy: they must appear to him like the labours of a Titan undertaken with the strength of a pigmy. Of what avail are the poor analytical and experimental faculties of the individual intellect in the solution of this immense and infinite problem? Hence, likewise, his bitter and often violent censure of all those who endeavour to transform the social state as it exists. Victory may indeed justify them, for victory Carlyle regards as the intervention of God by his decree, from which there is no appeal; but victory alone, for where is the man who can pretend to fore-calculate, to determine this decree? What avails it to fill the echoes with complaint, like Philoctetes? What avails it to contend convulsively in a hopeless struggle? What is, *is*. All our endeavours will not alter it before the time decreed; that time God alone determines.

What is to happen God will bring to pass; very probably by wholly different means from those which we, feeble and ephemeral creatures, may imagine. Point out the evil calmly, wisely; then resign yourself, trust, and wait! There is a deep discouragement, a very despair, at the bottom even of Mr. Carlyle's most fervid pages. He seems to seek God rather as a refuge than as the source of right and of power: from his lips, at times so daring, we seem to hear every instant the cry of the Breton mariner—"My God, protect me! My bark is so small and thy ocean so vast!"

Now all this is partly true, and nevertheless it is all partly false: true, inasmuch as it is the legitimate consequence from Mr. Carlyle's starting-point; false from a higher and more comprehensive point of view. If we derive all our ideas of human affairs and labours from the notion of the individual, and see only in social life "the aggregate of all the individual men's lives"—in history only, "the essence of innumerable biographies"*—if we always place *man*, singly, isolated, in presence of the universe and of God, we shall have full reason to hold the language of Mr. Carlyle. If all philosophy be in fact, like that of the ancient schools, merely a simple physiological study of the individual,—an analysis, more or less complete, of his faculties,—of what use is it, but as a kind of mental gymnastics? If our powers be limited to such as each one of us may acquire by himself, between those moments of our earthly career which we call birth and death, they may indeed be enough to attain the power of guessing and of expressing a small fragment of the truth: but who can hope to *realise* it here?

But if we start from the point of view of the collective

* *Essays*—"Signs of the Times."

existence of Humanity, and regard social life as the continued development of an idea by the life of all its individuals, if we regard history as the record of this continuous development in time and space through the works of individuals; if we believe in the *copartnery* and mutual responsibility of generations, never losing sight of the fact that the life of the individual is *his* development in a medium fashioned by the labours of all the individuals who have preceded him, and that the powers of the individual are *his* powers grafted upon those of all foregoing humanity,—our conception of life will change. Philosophy will appear to us as the science of the Law of life, as "the soul" (Mr. Carlyle himself once uses this expression in contradiction to the general spirit of his works), "of which religion, worship is the body." The sorrowful outcry against the actual generation raised by genius, from Byron down to George Sand, and so long unregarded or condemned, will be felt to be, what it is in truth, the registered, efficacious protest of the spirit, tormented by presentiments of the future, against a present corrupted and decayed; and we shall learn that it is not only our right but our duty to incarnate our thought in action. For it matters little that *our* individual powers be of the smallest amount in relation to the object to be attained; it matters little that the result of *our* action be lost in a distance which is beyond our calculation: we know that the powers of millions of men, our brethren, will succeed to the work after us, in the same track,—we know that the object attained, be it when it may, will be the result of *all* our efforts combined.

The object—an object to be pursued collectively, an ideal to be realised as far as possible here below by the association of all our faculties and all our powers—"operatio humanæ universitatis," as Dante says in a work little

known, or misunderstood, in which, five centuries ago, he laid down many of the principles upon which we are labouring at the present day—"ad quam ipsa universitas hominum in tantâ multitudine ordinatur, ad quam quidem operationem nec homo unus, nec domus una, nec vicinia, nec una civitas, nec regnum particulare, pertingere potest;"* this alone gives value and method to the life and acts of the individual.

Mr. Carlyle seems to me almost always to forget this. Being thus without a sound criterion whereby to estimate individual acts, he is compelled to value them rather by the power which has been expended upon them, by the energy and perseverance which they betray, than by the nature of the object toward which they are directed, and their relation to that object. Hence arises that kind of indifference which makes him, I will not say esteem, but love equally men whose whole life has been spent in pursuing contrary objects,—Johnson and Cromwell, for example. Hence that spirit of fatalism (to call things by their right names) which remotely pervades his work on the French Revolution, which makes him so greatly admire every manifestation of power and daring, under whatever form displayed, and so often hail, at the risk of becoming an advocate of despotism, might as the token of right. He desires undoubtedly *the good* everywhere and always; but he desires it, from whatever quarter it may come—from above or from below—imposed by power, or proclaimed by the free and spontaneous impulse of the multitude; and he forgets that the *good* is above all a moral question; that there is no true good apart from the consciousness of good; that it exists only where it is *achieved*, not *obtained* by man; he forgets that we are not machines from which

* *De Monarchia.*

as much work as possible is to be extracted, but free agents, called to stand or fall by our works. His theory of the *unconsciousness* of genius, the germ of which appears in the *Life of Schiller*, and is clearly defined in his essay "Characteristics," although at first view it may indeed appear to acknowledge human spontaneity, yet does in fact involve its oblivion, and sacrifices, in its application, the social object to an individual point of view.

Genius is not, generally speaking, unconscious of what it experiences or of what it is capable. It is not the suspended harp which sounds (as the statue of Memnon in the desert sounds in the sun) at the changing unforeseen breath of wind that sweeps across its strings: it is the conscious power of the soul of a man, rising from amidst his fellow-men, believing and calling himself a son of God, an apostle of eternal truth and beauty upon the earth, the privileged worshipper of an ideal as yet concealed from the majority: he is almost always sufficiently tormented by his contemporaries to need the consolation of this faith in himself, and this communion in spirit with the generations to come.

Cæsar, Christopher Columbus, were not unconscious: Dante, when, at the opening of the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Paradiso*, he hurled at his enemies that sublime menace which commentators without heart and without head have mistaken for a cry of supplication,—Kepler, when he wrote, "My book will await its reader: has not God waited six thousand years before He created a man to contemplate His works?" * Shakespeare himself, when he wrote—

> "And nothing stands . . .
> And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand "†

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* *Harmonices Mundi*, libri quinque.

† *Sonnets*, 60. See also *Sonnets* 17, 18, 55, 63, 81, etc.

these men were not unconscious: but even had they been so, even were genius always unconscious, the question lies not there. It is not the unconsciousness of his own genius that is important to a man, but of that which he proposes to do: it is the consciousness of the object, and not that of the means, which I assert to be indispensable, whenever man has any great thing to accomplish. *This* consciousness pervaded all the great men who have embodied their thought—the artists of the middle ages who have transferred to stone the aspiration of their souls towards heaven, and have bequeathed to us Christian cathedrals without even graving their names on a corner-stone.

What then becomes of the anathema hurled by Mr. Carlyle at philosophy? What becomes of the sentence passed with so much bitterness against the restless complaints of contemporary writers? What is philosophy but the science of aims? And is that which he calls the disease of the times, at the bottom aught else than the consciousness of a new object, not yet attained? I know there are many men who pretend, without right and without reality, that they already possess a complete knowledge of the means. Is it this that he attacks? If so, let him attack the premature cry of triumph, the pride, not the plaint. This is but the sign of suffering, and a stimulus to research: as such it is doubly sacred.

Doubly sacred, I say—and to murmur at the plaint is both unjust and vain; vain—for whatever we may do, the words "*The whole creation groaneth*" of the apostle whom I love to quote, will be verified the most forcibly in the choicest intellects, whensoever an entire order of things and ideas shall be exhausted; whensoever, in Mr. Carlyle's phrase, there shall exist no longer any social faith:—unjust, for while on one side it attacks those who suffer the most,

on the other it would suppress that which is the system of the evil, and prevent attention being awakened to it.

Suffer in silence, do you say? No, cry aloud upon the housetops, sound the tocsin, raise the alarm at all risks, for it is not alone your house that is on fire; but that of your neighbour, that of every one. Silence is frequently a duty when suffering is only personal; but it is an error and a fault when the suffering is that of millions. Can we possibly imagine that this complaining, this expression of unrest and discontent which at the present day bursts out on every side, is only the effect of the personal illusions of a few egoistical writers? Do we imagine that there can be any pleasure in parading one's own real suffering before the public? It is more pleasant to cause smiles than tears in those around us. But there are times in which every oracle utters words of ill omen; when the heavens are veiled, and evil is everywhere: how should it not be so in the heart of those whose life vibrates most responsively to the pulse of the universal life? What! after proving the evil that surrounds us every instant in our pages, after showing society hastening through moral anarchy and the absence of all belief towards its dissolution, can we expect the features to remain calm? Are we astonished if the voice trembles, if the soul shudders? The human mind is disquieted; it questions itself, listens to itself, studies itself: this is evidently not its normal state. Be it so; but what is to be done? must we abolish thought—deny the intellect the right, the duty, of studying itself, when it is sick? This is indeed the tendency of the essay on "Characteristics," one of Mr. Carlyle's most remarkable works. The first part is truly admirable: the evil existing and the principal symptoms are perfectly described; but the conclusion is most lame and impotent.

It ends by commanding us to suppress (how, is not indicated), the disquietude, or what he terms the "self-sentience," the "self-survey," the consciousness. Would it not be better to endeavour to suppress the malady which produces it?

"Do we not already know"—he says in this same essay—"that the name of the infinite is Good, is God! Here on earth we are as soldiers, fighting in a foreign land, that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like soldiers, with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy. 'Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' Behind us, behind each one of us, lie six thousand years of human effort, human conquest: before us is the boundless Time, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered continents and Eldorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create; and from the bosom of Eternity shine for us celestial guiding-stars."

I have quoted this passage, because, approaching as it does near to the truth in the last lines, and contradicting them (in my opinion) in the first, it appears to me to include in essence all the certainties and uncertainties, the "everlasting Yea" and the "everlasting No" of Mr. Carlyle. God and Duty—these are, in fact, the two sacred words which mankind has in all critical periods repeated, and which at the present day still contain the means of salvation. But we must know in what manner these words are understood.

We all seek God; but where, how, with what aim? This is the question. Seek Him, Mr. Carlyle will say, in the starry firmament, on the wide ocean, in the calm and noble aspect of an heroic man; above all, in the words of genius and in the depths of your heart, purified from all

egoistic passions. God is everywhere: learn to find Him. You are surrounded by His miracles: you swim in the Infinite: the Infinite is also within you. BELIEVE—you will be better men; you will be what man should be.

True indeed—but how create belief? This, again, is the question. In all periods of the history of mankind there have been inspired men who have appealed to every generous, great, divine emotion in the human heart, against material appetites and selfish instincts. These men have been listened to; mankind has *believed;* it has, during several centuries, done great and good things in the name of its creeds. Then it has stopped, and ceased to act in harmony with them. Why so? Was the thing it had believed, false? No, it was incomplete: like all human things, it was a fragment of the absolute Truth, overladen with many mere *realities* belonging to time and place, and destined to disappear after having borne their fruit, as soon as the human intelligence should be ripe for a higher initiation.

When this period arrives, all mere isolated exhortation to faith is useless. What is preached may be eminently sage and moral; it may have, here and there, the authority of an individual system of philosophy, but it will never compel belief. It may meet with a sterile theoretic approbation, but it will not command the practice, it will not dictate the action, it will not gain that mastery over the *life* of men which will regulate all its manifestations. If the contrary were true, there is no religion that could not maintain the harmony of the terrestrial world by the morality which is either developed or involved in it. But there are times in which all individual efforts are paralysed by the general apathy, until (by the development of new relations between men, or by calling into action an element hitherto suppressed) we alter the starting-point of social energy,

and vigorously arouse the torpid intellect of the multitudes.

We all seek God; but we know that here below we can neither attain unto Him, nor comprehend Him, nor contemplate Him: the absorption into God of some of the Brahminical religions, of Plato, and of some modern ascetics, is an illusion that cannot be realised. Our aim is to approach God: this we can do by our works alone. To incarnate, as far as possible, His Word; to translate, to realise His Thought, is our charge here below. It is not by contemplating His works that we can fulfil our mission upon earth: it is by devoting ourselves to our share in the evolution of His work, without interruption, without end. The earth and man touch at all points on the infinite: this we know well, but is it enough to know this? have we not to march onwards, to advance into this infinite? But can the individual finite creature of a day do this, if he relies only upon his own powers? It is precisely from having found themselves for an instant face to face with infinity, without calculating upon other faculties, upon other powers, than their own, that some of the greatest intellects of the day have been led astray into scepticism or misanthropy. Not identifying themselves sufficiently with Humanity, and startled at the disproportion between the object and the means, they have ended by seeing naught but death and annihilation on every side, and have no longer had courage for the conflict. The ideal has appeared to them like a tremendous irony.

In truth, human life, regarded from a merely individual point of view, is deeply sad. Glory, power, grandeur, all perish—playthings of a day, broken at night. The mothers who loved us, whom we love, are snatched away; friendships die, and we survive them. The phantom of death

watches by the pillow of those dear to us: the strongest and purest love would be the bitterest irony, were it not a promise for the future; and this promise itself is but imperfectly felt by us, such as we are at the present day. The intellectual adoration of truth, without hope of realisation, is sterile: there is a larger void in our souls, a yearning for more truth than we can realise during our short terrestrial existence. Break the bond of continuity between ourselves and the generations which have preceded and will follow us upon the earth, and what then is the devotion to noble ideas but a sublime folly? Annihilate the connecting-link between all human lives; efface the infallibility involved in the idea of progression, of collective mankind, and what is martyrdom but a suicide without an object? Who would sacrifice—not his life, for that is little—but all the days of his life, his affections, the peace of those he loves, for the Fatherland, for human liberty, for the evolution of a great moral thought, when a few years, perhaps a few days, will suffice to destroy it? Sadness, unending sadness, discordance between the will and the power, disenchantment, discouragement—such is human life, when looked at only from the individual point of view. A few rare intellects escape the common law and attain calmness; but it is the calm of inaction, of contemplation; and contemplation here on earth is the selfishness of genius.

I repeat, Mr. Carlyle has instinctively all the presentiments of the new epoch; but following the teachings of his intellect rather than his heart, and rejecting the idea of the collective life, it is absolutely impossible for him to find the means of their realisation. A perpetual antagonism prevails throughout all he does; his instincts drive him to action, his theory to contemplation. Faith and discouragement alternate in his works, as they must in his

soul. He weaves and unweaves his web, like Penelope: he preaches by turns life and nothingness: he wearies out the powers of his readers, by continually carrying them from heaven to hell, from hell to heaven. Ardent, and almost menacing, upon the ground of ideas, he becomes timid and sceptical as soon as he is engaged on that of their application. I may agree with him with respect to the aim—I cannot respecting the means; he rejects them all, but he proposes no others. He desires progress, but shows hostility to all who strive to progress: he foresees, he announces as inevitable, great changes or revolutions in the religious, social, political order; but it is on condition that the revolutionists take no part in them: he has written many admirable pages on Knox and Cromwell, but the chances are that he would have written as admirably, although less truly, against them, had he lived at the commencement of their struggles.

Give him the past—give him a power, an idea, something which has triumphed and borne its fruits—so that, placed thus at a distance, he can examine and comprehend it from every point of view, calmly, at his ease, without fear of being troubled by it, or drawn into the sphere of its action—and he will see in it all that there is to see, more than others are able to see. Bring the object near to him, and as with Dante's souls in the *Inferno*, his vision, his faculty of penetration, is clouded. If his judgment respecting the French Revolution be in my opinion very incomplete, the reason is, that the event is yet unconcluded, and that it appears to him living and disturbing. The past has everything to expect from him—the present, nothing—not even common justice. Have patience, he says, to those who complain; all will come to pass, but not in your way: God will provide the means. But through whom, then, will

God provide means upon earth, unless by us? Are we not His agents here below? Our destinies are within us: to understand them, we need intellect—to accomplish them, power. And why does Mr. Carlyle assign us the first without the second? Wherefore does he speak to us at times in such beautiful passages of hope and faith, of the divine principle that is within us, of the duty which calls us to act, and the next instant smile with pity upon all we attempt, and point out to us the night, the vast night of extinction, swallowing up all our efforts?

There is, in my opinion, something very incomplete, very narrow, in the kind of contempt which Mr. Carlyle exhibits, whenever he meets in his path with anything that men have agreed to call political reform. The forms of government appear to him almost without meaning; such subjects as the extension of suffrage, the guarantee of any kind of political right, are evidently in his eyes pitiful things, materialism more or less disguised. What he requires is that men should grow morally better, that the number of just men should increase: one wise man more in the world would be to him a fact of more importance than ten political revolutions. It would be so to me also were I able to create him, as Wagner does his Homunculus, by blowing on the furnaces,—if the changes in the political order of things did not precisely constitute the very preliminary steps indispensable to the creation of the just and wise man.

I know well enough that there are too many men who lose their remembrance of God in the symbol, who do not go beyond questions of form, but contract a love for them, and end in a kind of liberalism for liberalism's sake. I do not need to enter my protest against this caprice if the reader has paid attention to what I have already said. In

my view the real problem which rules all political agitation is one of education. I believe in the progressive moral amelioration of man as the sole important object of all labour, as the sole strict duty which ought to direct us: the rest is only a question of means. But where the liberty of means does not exist, is not its attainment the first thing needful?

Take an enslaved country,—Italy, for example,—there we find no education, no press, no public meetings; but censors, who, after having mutilated a literary journal for years, seeing that it still survives, suppress it altogether;* —archbishops, who preach against all kinds of popular instruction, and declare the establishment of infant schools to be immoral;†—princes who affix a stamp to all the books allowed to their subjects.‡ What can be done to ameliorate in such a country the moral and intellectual condition of the people?

Take a country of serfs,—Poland or Russia, for example, —how can we set about the attempt to annihilate the odious distinctions only to be destroyed by a revolution?

Take a man, for instance, who labours hard from fourteen to sixteen hours a-day to obtain the bare necessaries of existence; he eats the bacon and potatoes (when indeed he can get them) in a place which might rather be called a den than a house; and then, worn out, lies down and sleeps; he is brutalised in a moral and physical point of view; he has no ideas but propensities,—not beliefs but instincts; he does not read,—he cannot read: he has not within his reach the least means of self-enlightenment, and

* The *Subalpino*, the *Letture Popolari*, in Piedmont; the *Antologia* at Florence, etc.

† The Archbishop of Turin, Franzoni, in a pastoral letter.

‡ The Duke of Modena.

his contact with the upper class is only the relation of a servant to a master, of a machine to the director of a machine. Of what use are books to such a being? How can you come at him, how kindle the divine spark which is torpid in his soul, how give the notion of life, of sacred life, to him who knows it only by the material labour that crushes him, and by the wages that abase him? Alas! this man's name is Million; he is met with on every side; he constitutes nearly three-fourths of the population of Europe. How will you give him more time and more energy to develop his faculties except by lessening the number of his hours of labour, and increasing his profits. How can you render his contact with the enlightened classes serviceable to him, except by altering the nature of his relations toward them? How, above all, will you raise his fallen soul, except by saying to him—by telling him—in *acts*, not in reasonings which he does not understand—"Thou, too, art man: the breath of God is in thee: thou art here below to develop thy being under all its aspects; thy body is a temple; thy immortal soul is the priest, which ought to do sacrifice and ministry for all?"

And what is this act, this token destined to raise him in his own eyes, to show to him that he has a mission upon earth, to give him the consciousness of his duties and his rights, except his initiation into citizenship—in other words, the suffrage? What is meant by "re-organising labour," but bringing back the dignity of labour? What is a new form, but the *case* or the symbol—of a new idea? We perhaps have had a glimpse of the ideal in all its purity—we feel ourselves capable of soaring into the invisible regions of the spirit. But are we, on this account, to isolate ourselves from the movement which is going on among our brethren beneath us? Must we be told, "You

profane the sanctity of the idea," because the men into whom we seek to instil it are flesh and blood, and we are obliged to speak to their senses? Condemn all action, then; for action is only a form given to thought—its application, practice. "The end of man is an *action*, and not a *thought*." Mr. Carlyle himself repeats this in his *Sartor Resartus* (book ii., ch. 6), and yet the spirit which pervades his works seems to me too often of a nature to make his readers forget it.

It has been asked,* what is at the present day the Duty of which we have spoken so much? A complete reply would require a volume, but I may suggest it in a few words. Duty consists of that love of God and man which renders the life of the individual the representation and expression of *all* that he believes to be the truth, absolute or relative. Duty is progressive, as the evolution of truth, it is modified and enlarged with the ages; it changes its manifestations according to the requirement of times and circumstances. There are times in which we must be able to die like Socrates; there are others, in which we must be able to struggle like Washington: one period claims the pen of the sage, another requires the sword of the hero. But here, and everywhere, the source of this Duty is God and His law—its object, Humanity—its guarantee, the mutual responsibility of men—its measure, the intellect of the individual and the demands of the period—its limit, power.

Study the universal tradition of humanity, with all the faculties, with all the disinterestedness, with all the comprehensiveness of which God has made you capable; where you find the general permanent voice of humanity agreeing with the voice of your conscience, be sure that you hold in your grasp something of absolute truth—gained,

* Mr. Horne, in his Preface to Gregory VII.

and for ever yours. Study also with interest, attention, and comprehensiveness, the tradition of your epoch and of your nation—the idea, the want, which ferments within them: where you find that your conscience sympathises with the general aspiration, you are sure of possessing the relative truth. Your life must embody both these truths, must represent and communicate them, according to your intelligence and your means: you must be not only MAN, but a man of your age; you must act as well as speak; you must be able to die without being compelled to acknowledge, "I have known such a fraction of the truth, I could have done such a thing for its triumph, and I have not done it." Such is duty in its most general expression. As to its special application to our times, I have said enough on this point in that part of my article which establishes my difference from the views of Mr. Carlyle, to render its deduction easy. The question at the present day is the perfecting of the principle of association, a transformation of the medium in which mankind moves: duty therefore lies in a *collective* labour,—every one should measure his powers, and see what part of this labour falls to him. The greater the intellect and influence a man enjoys, the greater his responsibility; but assuredly contemplation cannot satisfy duty in any degree.

Mr. Carlyle's idea of duty is naturally different. Thinking only of individuality, calculating only the powers of the individual, he would rather restrict than enlarge its sphere. The rule which he adopts is that laid down by Goethe—"Do the duty which lies nearest thee." And this rule is good in as far as it is, like all other moral rules, susceptible of a wide interpretation,—bad, so far as taken literally, and fallen into the hands of men whose tendencies to self-sacrifice are feeble, it may lead to the justification of

selfishness, and cause that which at bottom should only be regarded as the wages of duty to be mistaken for duty itself. It is well known what use Goethe, the high-priest of the doctrine, made of this maxim, enshrining himself in what he called "Art," and, amidst a world in misery, putting away the question of Religion and Politics as a "troubled element for Art," though a vital one for *man*, and giving himself up to the contemplation of forms, and the adoration of self.

There are at the present day but too many who imagine they have perfectly done their duty, because they are kind towards their friends, affectionate in their families, inoffensive toward the rest of the world. The maxim of Goethe and of Mr. Carlyle will always suit and serve such men, by transforming into duties the individual, domestic, or other affections—in other words, the consolations of life. Mr. Carlyle probably does not carry out his maxim in practice; but his principle leads to this result, and cannot theoretically have any other. "Here on earth we are as soldiers;" he says:—true, but "we understand nothing, nor do we require to understand anything of the plan of the campaign;" he adds,—what law, what sure object can we then have for action, excepting those to which our individual instincts lead us? Religion is the first of our wants, he will go on to say; but whilst I hold religion to be a belief and a worship in common; an ideal, the realisation of which mankind collectively must seek—a heaven, of which the earth must be rendered by our efforts the visible symbol—to him it is only a simple relation of the individual to God. It ought, therefore, according to my view, to preside over the development of collective life; according to his view, its only office is to pacify the troubled soul.

Does it at least lead to this? Is he (I speak of the

writer, of whom alone I have a right to speak) calm? No, he is not: in this continual alternation between aspirations as of a Titan and powers necessarily very limited, between the feeling of life and that of nothingness, his powers are paralysed as well as those of his readers. At times there escape from his lips accents of distress, which, whatever he may do, he cannot remove from the minds of those who listen to him with attention and sympathy. What else is that incessant and discouraged yearning after rest, which, although he has formally renounced the happiness of life, pervades all his works—*Sartor Resartus* especially—and which so constantly calls to our minds the words of Arnaud to Nicolle,—"N'avons-nous pas toute l'éternité pour nous reposer?"—"Let me rest here, for I am way-weary and life-weary; I will rest here, were it but to die; to die or to live is alike to me, alike insignificant. . . Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE . . the heavy dreams rolled gradually away."* Alas! no, poor Teufelsdröck! there is no repose here on earth. It matters little if the limbs be bruised, the faculties exhausted. Life is a conflict and a march: the "heavy dreams" will return: we are still too low; the air is still too heavy around us for them to "roll away." Strength consists in advancing in the midst and in spite of them—not in causing them to vanish. They will vanish higher up, when, after mounting a step upon the ladder, life shall expand in a purer medium: the flower, too, has its origin and germinates in the earth, to expand only in another element, in the air and sun of God. Meanwhile suffer and act; suffer for thyself, act for thy brethren, and with them. Speak not ill of science, of philosophy, of

* *Sartor Resartus*, book ii. ch. 9.

the spirit of inquiry; these are the implements which God has given us for our labour,—good or bad, according as they are employed for good or for evil. Tell us no longer that "life itself is a disease—knowledge, the symptom of derangement;" talk no more of a "first state of freedom and paradisiacal unconsciousness."* There is more of *what is called* Byronism in these few words than in the whole of Byron. Freedom and paradise are not behind, but before us. Not life itself, but the deviation from life, is disease: life is sacred; life is our aspiration toward the ideal,—our affections, engagements, which will one day be fulfilled, our virtues, a step toward greater. It is blasphemy to pronounce a word of contempt or anger against it.

The evil at the present day is, not that men assign too much value to life, but the reverse. Life has fallen in estimation, because, as at all periods of crisis and disorganisation, the chain is broken which in all forms of belief attaches it through humanity to heaven. It has fallen, because the consciousness of mutual human responsibility, which alone constitutes its dignity and strength, being lost together with all community of belief, its sphere of activity has become restricted, and it has been compelled to fall back upon material interests, minor passions, and petty aims. It has fallen, because it has been too much individualised; and the remedy lies in re attaching life to heaven—in raising it again, in restoring to it the consciousness of its power and sanctity. The means consist in retempering the individual life through communion with the universal life; they consist in restoring to the individual that which I have from the outset called the feeling of *the*

* *Essays*—"Charactoristics."

collective, in pointing out to him his place in the tradition of the species, in bringing him into communion, by love and by works, with all his fellow-men. By isolating ourselves, we have begun to feel ourselves feeble and little; we have begun to despise our own efforts and those of our brethren towards the attainment of the ideal; and we have in despair set ourselves to repeat and comment upon the "*Carpe diem*" of the heathen poet; we must make ourselves great and strong again by association; we must not discredit life, but make it holy. By persisting to search out the secret, the law of individuality in the individuality itself, man ends only in egotism, if he is evil-minded—in scepticism, in fatalism, or in contemplation, if he is virtuous. Mr. Carlyle, whatever he may himself think, fluctuates between these last three tendencies.

The function which Mr. Carlyle at present fulfils in England appears to me therefore important, but incomplete. Its level is perhaps not high enough for the demands of the age; nevertheless, it is noble, and nearer to the object which I have pointed out than that perhaps of any other living writer. All that he combats is indeed really false, and has never been combated more energetically; that which he teaches is not always true. His aspirations belong to the future—the temper and habits of his intelligence attach him to the past. My sympathies may claim the one half of the man—the other half escapes me. All that I regard as important, he considers so also; all that I foresee, he foresees likewise. We only differ respecting the road to follow, the means to be adopted: we serve the same God, we separate only in the worship. Whilst I would dive into the midst of present things, in order to draw inspiration from them, while I would mingle with men in order to draw strength from them, he

would retire to a distance and contemplate. I appeal perhaps more than he to tradition ; he appeals more than I to individual conscience. My theory, perhaps, runs the risk of sacrificing something of the purity of the *idea* in the pursuit of the means ; he runs the risk, without intending it, of deserting his brother labourers.

Nevertheless, let each follow his own path. There will always be a field for the fraternity of noble spirits, even if they differ in their notion of the present life. Their outward manifestations may vary, but only like the radiations of light upon the earth. The ray assumes different colours, according to the different media through which it passes, according to the surface of the objects upon which it falls ; but wherever it falls, it warms and vivifies more or less visibly, and all the beams proceed from the same source. Like the sun, the fountain of terrestrial light, there is a common element in heaven for all human spirits which possess strong, firm, and disinterested convictions. In this sanctuary of the soul Mr. Carlyle will assuredly commune with all the chosen souls that adore God and truth, and all who have learned to suffer without cursing, and to sacrifice themselves without despair.

I can but briefly refer to Mr. Carlyle's last work, recently published, entitled *Past and Present.* I have read it with attention, and with a desire to find cause to alter my opinions. I, however, find nothing to retract : on the contrary, the present work appears to confirm those opinions. *Past and Present* is a work of power, and will do incalculable good. No one will close its pages without having felt awakened in him thoughts and feelings which would perhaps have still slept long in his heart : yet should the reader desire to open it again, with a view to study how he may realise these sentiments and thoughts in the

world, he will often, in the midst of eloquent pages, of fruitful truths expressed with an astonishing energy, meet with disappointment. *Past and Present* is, in my opinion, remarkable rather for the tendencies and aptitudes which it presents, than for the paths which it points out. It is a step *towards* the future, not a step *in* the future. Will Mr. Carlyle take this step? I know not, but there is everything to hope.

ON THE HISTORY

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE.

(*First published in the "Monthly Chronicle."*)

THE praise bestowed upon this book on its first appearance was, I believe, unanimous. Men of opinions the most diametrically opposed were united in their admiration of the writer, and so far as he was concerned, a truce was formed between the two camps into which society is divided in England as elsewhere.

This unusual concord was evidence alike of the merits and demerits of the book. It was a mark of homage rendered to the indisputable and potent genius of Thomas Carlyle, and of the general admiration felt for an artistic power and vigour of execution almost unrivalled in this country. But all who are aware how inexorable is party logic, must have understood, from this very unanimity of praise, that the book was regarded as dangerous by none, and that there was a general sense that admiration might be safely expressed, as it involved no risk of serious concession from any side.

Now, is it possible that a book on such a subject as the French Revolution, thus accepted by all parties, can be a work of lasting usefulness, and in no way inferior to the exigences of the times?

It is not possible.

The actual state of society—it is useless to deny it—is a state of war, of active irreconcilable war on every side and in all things; and at no period, perhaps, has the great struggle—as old as the world itself—between *fact* and Right, fatalism and Liberty, assumed a character so deep and universal as at present. To those who are capable of tracing the workings of a Principle throughout all its diverse manifestations, this contest is evident in every branch of human development, from industry up to Religion. The Principle of Emancipation is everywhere at work. The French Revolution did not furnish its programme as has been generally supposed, nor was it even its highest and most mature expression; but it manifested and revealed it with the intensest energy in the political sphere, and diffused it over the whole of Europe.

In the French Revolution the spirit of Emancipation became incarnate in a single people, and gave battle to its enemies. The struggle was long, bloody, and destructive, fruitful of great deeds and of great crimes, of Titanic fury and of vital conquest.

Can any author remain neutral in the presence of two opposing banners in such a contest, without grave fault or error? How is it possible to avoid taking sides in a conflict between such mighty resentments and such mighty hopes? Yet how is an author to make choice of either side, without awakening the anger of those arrayed upon the other?

He was bound to remain impartial, you will say.

Undoubtedly: but is there no distinction between impartiality and indifference?

Impartiality neither excludes earnestness of conviction, nor choice between two adverse camps. It imposes the duty of neither concealing nor embellishing the faults which occasionally sully the banner of Right, as it does of recording every noble idea or inspiration arising among those ranged beneath the opposite standard.

But such a love of justice would be insufficient to conciliate for the historian the favour of the party he condemned: it might even embitter their anger against him, as against a judge whose sentence, free from all suspicion of partiality, was less open to appeal. Impartiality alone, therefore, will not absolve the historian of such a revolution from the blame or rancour of those whose fathers fought either for or against it, and who are themselves still struggling for or against its consequences. There must be more than this, to win such tolerance from both sides. To obtain it, the historian must, as it were, confine himself within a circle revolving around its own axis, and be content to reproduce the isolated *fact* detached from its position as a part of the general progress of the people, apart from its relative value, and without any distinctive sign indicating its rank and importance in the collective life of Humanity. Losing sight of all conception of the whole in the analysis of a multitude of particular facts; forgetting the idea in the symbol, and the principle in its material expression, the historian must limit himself to the mere study of *Men*, where others would study the *Idea* for the triumph of which they were consciously or unconsciously labouring. He must regard as the offspring of individual impulse, deeds, which others recognise as having derived their source or inspiration from the wants

and desires of the multitude, and set before us as the transitory effects of individual action, those results in which others acknowledge the necessary operation of a providential law, often directly opposed to the purposes and intentions of the actors. In short, in order to obtain such general acceptance, the historian must abstain not merely from tracing and developing, but even from admitting the existence of a collective law of life governing the human race, deny or overlook the unity of the divine idea in course of gradual accomplishment on earth, and in fact (whether consciously or not) take sides with Materialism, by considering every fact as the offspring of accidental circumstances or chance, and destitute of all connecting links with the past or future of Humanity.

It is only when, by his adoption of this method, contending parties are convinced that the historian seeks to introduce no new elements into the contest by his narration of past facts, nor to present them as a presage of the future, but simply as things which may be modified or cancelled by individuals according to circumstances, that they are willing to allow him a few lukewarm expressions of favour even to their adversaries, and feel sufficiently secure to surrender themselves with pleasure to the brief influence exercised by his art.

By this method, however, the sacred mission of the historian is at an end, and in its place we have but the brilliant ephemeral vocation of the artist. I use the term artist, not in the sense in which *I* understand it—as a priest of the universal life and prophet of a high social aim —but as the word is too generally understood at the present day, to describe a being alike the offspring and parent of transitory impressions, idolater of the form and image, whose soulless and fugitive creations, evoked by the power

of fantasy alone, are destitute of all serious intent or purpose.

The writer who adopts this method is no longer—as a true comprehension of the wants of the age requires him to be—the depositary and conservator for future ages of the law of which Humanity is the sole progressive interpreter; he has even lost the right conceded to the historian by the ancients, of sitting in judgment upon the facts he relates, *ne virtutes sileantur, utque pravis dixtis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.* For in virtue of what general *criterium* shall he point out *good* and *evil*, crime and virtue, in a past wherein he had no part or share? By renouncing the right of determining the status, worth, and collective mission of a nation and of Humanity, he has deprived himself of all law or rule of judgment save the dictates of his own individual conscience. Lost amid a multitude of different facts, and unable to calculate their relative value and importance, which depend upon and are derived from the series to which they belong; oscillating for ever between horror and admiration, discomfited by the rapid absorption of the forms that excite this horror or admiration into the same eternal night of nothingness, he does but derive bitterness and disquietude from a spectacle that should have brought its lesson of peace to his soul; a sense of impotence from that which should have inspired him with faith—fatalism and scepticism instead of hope and belief. According to his natural bias or temperament, he will be more strongly moved to sympathy with things that rise or things that fall; his pages will assume the likeness of the elegy or hymn; he will accompany the car of the conqueror with applause, or weep with those who follow the victim to the tomb; he will build a triumphal arch to force, or raise an altar to pity.

Thiers, in his *History of the French Revolution*, chose the first course; Carlyle the second; nor could it be otherwise. The first is dominated by egotism and appetite, while the heart of the other is a temple of all the noble and generous affections, revealed to us by everything he writes.

But the reader? Is not the result of each method equally defective as far as he is concerned? Does he not seek in history, and ought he not to derive from it, a lesson as to the means of destroying the causes of suffering, rather than a mere inducement to weep over it? Shall the life of past generations bequeath us no better legacy than an emotion of mournful pity? Is there no immortality on earth as well as in heaven? Do not the past generations live again in us through the lesson they have transmitted to us beyond the tomb? And is it not the special mission of the historian to penetrate and perpetuate this teaching? Is he not the executor of their last will, the angel of their second life here below? Is he not called upon to immortalise it in that grand Pantheon of Humanity to which each passing generation of mankind contributes a stone?

The true historian—Janus of art—wanders among the ruins of the past, with thoughts fixed on the future. His works determine the links of continuity between that which has been and that which is to be. His is a great and holy mission; can he accomplish it by merely teaching us to mourn?

Simply to set before us, incident by incident, fragment by fragment, an external view of the series of facts, the succession of crises through which extinct generations have passed; to drag poor, weak, individual man from time to time into the midst of that *ensemble;* to place him, as if for the mere purpose of crushing and overwhelming him,

face to face with the profound *mysteries of time, the darkness without end, the enigma of existence ;*—such are not the means by which the historian can rightly fulfil the task he has undertaken. There are in this world enigmata which man is doomed either to unravel or perish, and every historian as highly gifted by genius as Carlyle is bound—careless of praise or blame—to play the part of Œdipus. If he does not attempt this, he tacitly confesses himself inferior to his task, and renounces all influence upon the companions of his pilgrimage here below. But by attempting this, even if unsuccessful, he will yet have served Humanity ; for even in the errors of powerful minds there is ever some fragment of the truth.

To embrace an entire subject in its complete spiritual unity, from an elevated point of view, indicated by the intellect and approved by conscience ; to study it in its relation to universal tradition, in order to assign to it its fitting rank therein, and mark its degree upon the scale of social progress ; to derive from these the true character and importance of every act, and estimate the morality of the agent ; to reproduce material facts with exactitude and impartiality, yet in such wise as to guide the reader to their generating idea ;—such is the office of the historian. But in order to fulfil this, a true conception of Humanity is required, and this conception Carlyle lacks.

It is the capital defect of the book.

Carlyle does not recognise in a people—nor, *à fortiori*, in Humanity—any collective life or collective aim. He recognises only individuals. For him, therefore, there is not, there cannot be, any providential law—in fact every law contemplates mankind as a whole—nor any intelligible chain of connection between cause and effect. He himself declares this in the second chapter of the third book, vol. ii.,

and in the second chapter of the first book, vol. i., and elsewhere. What criterium of truth he substitutes for this, or whether indeed he substitutes any, I have been unable to discover—there are only a few lines, which I shall have occasion to quote, which give us any indication of his own feeling or belief—and this want gives rise to an inexpressible sense of obscurity, of something uncertain and nebulous, I might almost say anarchical, in the work. We rise from its perusal disturbed in mind, with a sense of delusion and discouragement, a disposition towards scepticism nearly approaching fatalism—for the one is but a consequence of the other—and the *What boots it?* of the fatalist, is only another form of the *What can we know about it?* of the sceptic.

The spirit of the *Walpurgis Nacht* breathes throughout these pages of Carlyle, inspired by an imagination full of true poetry and power, constantly stirred and excited by the perusal of the documents of the revolutionary period. The writer—I should say the poet—fascinated, passive, and absorbed by the various images that flitted in rapid succession across his brain, has stamped them upon his pages without judging or interpreting them, almost without pausing to gaze upon or to examine them, and as if in terror. The extinct heroes of his poem pass before our eyes as before his own, in *un' aria senza tempo tinta*, a phantasmagoric vision that well might shake the strongest brain—a vision of gigantic spectres, sad or serene by turns, but all bearing the impress of an inexorable fatality. What task do they perform? What mission do they fulfil? The poet tells us not; he does but mourn over each in turn, to whatsoever race or order they belong. What did they accomplish? What goal did they seek? We know not. Devoured by Time, they pass one after the other across the

blood-stained plain, to vanish, lost in night—in the vast night of Goethe, the nameless and bottomless abyss. If any seem to linger, the voice of the poet bids them "*delay not: onward, onward, to meet thy fate.*"

When all have vanished, you rouse yourself from the whirling vortex, like one awaking from nightmare; you look around, as if for some vestige of these fleeting images, seeking if they have left aught behind them to suggest some explanation of enigma. You see naught but the void: three words alone remain, as summary of the entire history—*Bastile, Constitution, Guillotine.*

This mournful trilogy is the summing up of the narrative of the greatest event of modern times; and whilst it makes known to us the intellectual secret of the writer, who has only seized the material and external side of that event, does it not also reveal the secret of his soul—unknown, it may be, even to himself—and the penalty he has to pay for not having searched deeper while yet able to do so? Terror and discouragement. The Constitution—the aim of every effort during that period—is placed between a prison and a scaffold: three epigraphs, taken from Goethe, accompany the three words he has chosen as titles for his three volumes; and the last concludes with a menace to all those who believe in the possibility of constituting themselves apostles of liberty.

A *Bastile*, a *Constitution*, and a *Guillotine.*

Is this indeed the whole significance of the French Revolution? Does this gigantic event teach us no other lesson? Has the historian no better counsel for the youth of Europe than the threatening *Versuchs* of Goethe?

No: it cannot be. Five-and-twenty millions of men do not rise up as one man, nor rouse one half of Europe at their call. for a mere word, an empty formula, a shadow.

The Revolution,—that is to say, the tumult and fury of the Revolution—perished; the form perished, as all forms perish when their task is accomplished, but the *idea* of the Revolution survived. That idea, freed from every temporary envelope or disguise, now reigns for ever, a fixed star in the intellectual firmament; it is numbered among the conquests of Humanity.

Every great idea is immortal: the French Revolution rekindled the sense of *Right*, of liberty, and of equality in the human soul, never henceforth to be extinguished; it awakened France to the consciousness of the inviolability of her national life; and awakened in every people a perception of the powers of collective will, and a conviction of ultimate victory, of which none can deprive them. It summed up and concluded (in the political sphere) one epoch of Humanity, and led us to the confines of the next.

These are results which will not pass away: they defy every protocol, constitutional theory, or *veto* of despotic power.

Carlyle—if indeed he desired to help or serve us—ought to have made himself the promulgator of this truth. He did not do so; he did not even attempt it. Whether deceived by a false philosophic method, or led astray by the absence of all such method, he has but given us a series of pictures, admirably executed, but wanting a ruling idea, lacking all connection and definite purpose. His book is properly *Illustrations to the French Revolution*—illustrations designed by the hand of a master, but by one from whom we expected a greater and more fruitful work.

I am aware that this judgment of Carlyle is based upon ideas which are apt to bring upon those who hold them the name of dreamers, of believers in formulæ and systems.

Nor am I troubled by such epithets. They have ever been bestowed upon the first supporters of new doctrines afterwards received and accepted as truth; and at the present day they who apply them do so to conceal their own always injurious, often culpable, indifference. But as I do not wish to be misunderstood, I shall ask the reader to allow me a few observations on this subject. I shall afterwards return to Carlyle.

II.

In consequence of the habit, of which I spoke at the commencement, of confounding two things essentially distinct —impartiality and indifference—we have adopted a mode of viewing the mission of history, which, were it generally to obtain, would end by transforming the historian into a mere chronicler of facts, having naught of *Man* left but two eyes and a right hand. In order to satisfy this notion of his duties, the historian, albeit assuming to record the *life* of the past, must cease to be a thinker; he must carefully abstain from all belief—that is to say, from all *criterium* of judgment between good and evil, between the useful and the hurtful or useless. He must avoid all intelligent study of the laws which generate the phenomena he observes, and while still repeating the old phrases—*History is enlightened experience, the study of the Past is the school of the Future*, etc.—must profess not to comprehend the facts he narrates.

The office of the historian, so understood, dwindles into that of a collector of mummies, or guardian of inorganic, unclassified bodies. But even that which is required from those who occupy themselves with the study of inorganic bodies, forbidden by this theory to those who have assumed the

duty of preserving for us the tradition of Humanity. That tradition is thus left a prey to anarchy and confusion, and the historian, exiled from the moral world, sinks into the mere annalist: true history is destroyed; chronicles alone remain.

Fortunately our writers generally rebel against this narrow doctrine. The historian is, before all things, a man; gifted with nerves, muscles, blood, and the heart's life. He does, in fact, both love, hate. and think; and, whether well or ill, he does write in accordance with these sentiments. He is influenced by a theory of some kind, even when he declares himself to have none: he may proclaim himself emancipated from all systems, but he does, in fact, only condemn the systems of others, while he retains one of his own; he would not be a man if he did not. This is as true of Gibbon as it is of Botta; of Hume as of Michelet. I would undertake to declare the personal feelings of any writer, after reading twenty pages of his history.

How, indeed, is it possible for any writer to narrate any fact without having previously determined its value and importance in his own mind? and how can he determine these, unless he previously possess some theory of the moral laws by which human action is regulated? A narration, you say, is a picture in words; neither more nor less. Be it so; but even the painter who paints your portrait must place you in some attitude or costume, and will endeavour to select the attitude or costume most characteristic of the predominant disposition of your mind. And the facts he is about to relate ought to present themselves in a definite manner before the mind of the writer, whose aim it should be to place himself in a definite point of view, from which he feels he can most completely grasp their

true aspect. The historian must necessarily have some theory of arrangement, perspective, and expression, from which, logically, he will be guided to a theory of *causes*. The cause of every fact is an essential part of that fact, and determines its ruling characteristics. What is a fact, but the effort of a *cause* seeking to create or influence the future?

Is not the historian, to a certain extent, *compelled* to proceed from the theory of causes to that of purposes or *aims?* Can any cause of action exist without generating action? Does not all action necessarily suppose an aim to be reached? Is not the attempt to reach this aim alike the cause and the secret of the development of a *fact?* How then can a fact be rightly viewed and narrated otherwise than from an eminence dominating alike the cause, the fact, and the aim?

The cause and the aim are the two extreme points or limits between which the action of every historic work must be comprised. They are the two elements, the right determination of which constitutes the law. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the historian should comprehend the law governing the fact before he can present it to us in its true light; necessary that he should understand the law of the generation of facts before he can arrange them in their true order for the reader.

I do not mean to say that the historian is bound to expound to us his philosophy of history, but I do mean that he is bound to possess one for his own guidance, and that every history should contain and exemplify the general outlines of that philosophy, just as every number contains its own root.

Every fact is the expression of a *Thought*. Even as no true representation of *Man* can be given by the mere body deprived of its vital spark, so no true representation of a

fact can be given by one who overlooks the thought which was its life and soul.

Not all men agree to and accept these ideas when thus expressed; but in practice they are accepted by all. All practically admit—whether confessedly or no—that no fact can be well represented or understood when viewed in isolation, and that the determination of its rank, and the relation it bears in time and space to the facts by which it was preceded and followed, are inseparable from its true representation; that the historian should view it from an eminence dominating the whole chain of facts with which it is connected; that the law by which facts are governed can alone explain them as a whole; that the law of the individual can only be determined from the species, and that therefore the historian must of necessity have a conception of laws governing the life of Humanity.

It is therefore of little import that some give these truths the name of formulæ, theories, or systems.

Our researches after a true conception of the laws governing the collective life of Humanity have given rise to two philosophical schools, around which are rallied the infinite secondary varieties represented by individual intellect. These two schools are at open warfare at the present day, and the victory of the one or the other will determine the direction to be taken by human activity in the dawning epoch.

The first school, which has been characterised in our own times as the *Circular Movement School*, is, in fact, most aptly represented by the ancient symbol of the serpent biting his own tail. For all those holding the doctrines of this school, collective life, organised progress, and the unity of human aim, are things having no existence. They only recognise a *genus humanum*, a multitude of individuals, urged by

wants and desires more or less uniform, to gather together in groups, for the better satisfaction of those wants and desires. Whenever local circumstances and community of language and customs induce in these nuclei a cohesion more complete, a Nation is formed. Each of these nations is under the influence of the law of circular movement, causing it to pass through various stages; from monarchy to aristocracy; from aristocracy to democracy; from democracy to anarchy; from anarchy to despotism, and so on, for ever retracing the same circle.

This law of circular movement is not—in the opinion of the majority of the school at least—the consequence of any preordained design of God (their theory only recognises the God of the individual), but results slowly and inevitably from the development of human passions and tendencies in reciprocal contact, and necessarily generating a series of facts. The same human passions and tendencies determine the greater or less duration of the various periods, as well as the general character of the social facts constituting the life of each Nation.

Such, more or less openly avowed, is the formula of this school. Its true source, in spite of every attempt to ascribe to it a different origin, is *Fatalism*. Amid all the vicissitudes of a world agitated by a thousand different aims, impulses, and affections, and unsustained by the consciousness of a providential law to regulate individual action, Man, according to the adepts of this school, is abandoned almost without defence to the instincts of appetite, of interest, of everything fatal on earth; the destined victim of circumstances fortuitous and unforeseen, although invariably uniform in result.

Of what avail, then, his endeavours? Can he recognise any lasting effect from his labour? No; the eternal flux

and reflux inexorably swallows up every idea, belief, courage, or sacrifice. The Infinite assumes the form of annihilation as far as man is concerned; and naught is left for him but the adoration of a fleeting happiness, the enjoyment of the present in every possible form if he be an egotist, or, if he be not such, the bitter inertia of impotence, the materialism of despair.

To this alternative is the school logically reduced; and according to the good or evil dispositions of the individuals of which it is composed, it is, in fact, divided into two factions; at times the servile flatterers of the powers of the day, at times mourning over the destiny of the powers of the past, its language is always full of sadness, as if its every conceit or symbol were prophetic of death. One might fancy its mission similar to that of the slave who followed the car of the conqueror in the triumphs of the ancients, to remind him: *Thy triumph does but bring thee one step nearer to thy fall.*

The followers of this school regard every act of enthusiasm with a sort of gloomy pity, and view with the smile of scepticism every act of devotion to an idea. They are suspicious of all general propositions, and delight in details and trifling incidents, as if seeking diversion or amusement. They occupy themselves with analysis, as if desirous of accustoming themselves to the idea of dissolution and of that nothingness which is in their eyes the sum of all the noblest human works. The school boasts many distinguished writers; from Machiavelli down to the end of the eighteenth century, all modern historians may be numbered in its ranks. Ancient historians belonged to this school, but forgetfulness of Collective Humanity was not in them the result of an intellectual choice; it was a necessary result of ignorance.

The other school, of recent date, though anticipated by the grand prevision of certain thinkers in the seventeenth, sixteenth, and even twelfth centuries, is now known as the School of Progressive Movement, though destined probably to bear a different title at a future day. It dates its origin from a new conception of Humanity, and a belief in a providential law of progress and perfectibility, not *infinite*, but *indefinite*, ruling over our human destiny. It deduces that belief from the tendency to association innate in man; from the unity of origin of the human race; from its ceaseless continuity and preservation; from the successive amplification and amelioration of social creeds; from the identity of the human goal, and the necessity of concentrating the whole sum of human forces to its achievement; from the unity of God and of His nature, so far as it has been vouchsafed to us to discover it; from the necessity of a certain relation and resemblance between the Creator and the created; from the instinct and necessity, which, as if it were a law of existence, urges every living being to the fuller development of all the germs, the faculties, the forces, the *life* within it; from tradition, which proves to us that the truths achieved by one generation become the indestructible possession of those that succeed it; from that aspiration, common to all of us, which has laid the foundation of all forms of religion, and made known to individuals the *duty* of self-sacrifice for aims impossible of realisation within the limits of earthly existence.

All these synthetic ideas have been confirmed by the study of the past, by the tradition of Humanity. The followers of this school study all things with a view to discover their mission, function, and scope in relation to the collective human being. They view the various peoples as workmen, so to speak, in the great workshop of

Humanity; as instruments of labour, which, even though they may decay or vanish when their task is done, yet leave behind results fruitful to the entire species. This theory affords a *criterium* of judgment by which to determine the character of all events in time and space, to place the actions of individuals in a true and useful light, and to dispense praise or blame according to motives.

The reproach of *Fatalism* which I have brought against the opposite school has been brought against this, but without just reason. Its accusers confound two things completely distinct: the *intention* of the agent and the results of the act.

The school regards individuality and human liberty as sacred; but the acts of the individual cannot alter the providential law, nor long retard the progressive movement of Humanity. The individual has the power of choice between good and evil, and is personally liable to the consequences of that choice; but he cannot achieve the prolonged triumph of Evil in the world. God's law modifies the results of human action, and turns to the profit of Humanity even the crimes and errors of the wicked or mistaken.

From these different doctrines result different habits of thought, method, and style in the two schools. The last keeps record of evil without failing to recognise the good beyond; it often laments, but never despairs; nor, whatever be the subject treated, do the works of this school instil scepticism into the mind of the reader. It would be more likely to err on the side of an exaggeration of faith. General ideas are welcome to it, as is shown by its method of organisation and arrangement in the narration of facts, so as to bring clearly into view their ruling and generating *idea*.

There are many honoured names among the followers of this school; it has continually increased in power and

influence since the beginning of the century, and at the present day nearly all the highest intellects of France and Germany accept its teachings.

In other countries it has been charged with being the *School of Hypothesis.* If they who bring the charge were to remember that all the greatest discoveries of the human intellect in the various sciences have originated in hypotheses, afterwards verified by study; how this hypothesis of the life and progress of Humanity may be traced up to Dante, and illumines the page of Bacon, and how fruitful it already is of life and movement among almost all the populations of Europe at the present day; they might, perhaps, be less hasty in condemnation. The existence, and the constantly increasing power and influence of the school, is, at any rate, a general and important *fact*, worthy of deep and earnest study; the more so as the question involved is one not merely intellectual, but moral in its direct bearing and consequences.

If it be true—as I believe—that the sphere of duty is enlarged in direct proportion to the intellectual capacity, it is clear that the solution of the question will give rise to a new definition of the sphere, activity, and direction of our duties in the actual Epoch.

III.

To return, however, to Carlyle. The results of the doctrines of the two schools are unmistakably evident in his present work.

Although the noble heart and powerful intellect of the writer instinctively urge him upon a better path, I am compelled, by the general tendency of the work, to class him among the followers of the *Circular Movement School.*

And there is one passage in his book (vol. i. lib. 4, chap. 4) where, in speaking of the *States General* of France, he gives us its explicit formula.

"It is the baptism-day of Democracy—the extreme unction day of Federalism! A superannuated system of society, decrepit with toils (for has it not done much?) produced *you*, and what you have and know; and with thefts and brawls, named glorious victories, and with profligacies, sensualities, and on the whole with dotage and senility, is now to die: and so, with death-throes and birth-throes, a new one is to be born. What a work! O earth and heavens, what a work! Battles and bloodshed, September massacres, bridges of Lodi, retreats of Moscow, Waterloos, Peterloos, ten-pound franchises, tar-barrels and guillotines! and from this present date, if one might prophesy, some two centuries of it still to fight! Two centuries; hardly less: before Democracy go through its due, most baleful stages of *Quackocracy;* and a pestilential world be burnt up, and have begun to grow green and young again!"

Compare this passage with the other (lib. 2, chap. 3).

"So, in this world of ours . . . must innovation and conservation wage their perpetual conflict as they may and can. Wherein the 'dæmonic element' that lurks in all human things *may* doubtless, some once in a thousand years, get vent!" And with many others scattered through the volumes. Compare it especially with the ironical tone adopted by the writer whenever the word *perfectibility*, or phrases belonging to the *Progressive* school, flow from his pen; and no doubt will remain to which of the two Carlyle himself inclines. His book displays the same contempt for every theory of *causes;* the same habit of deriving great events from fortuitous incidents; the same compassion

for every effort made to reduce the soul's ideal into practice.

And now observe the results. By rejecting or neglecting the significance of his subject in its relation to the history of the world, Carlyle has lost sight of the true significance of each separate fact in its relation to his own subject. By refusing or avoiding to determine the Humanitarian aim of the French Revolution, he has lost the only rule or indication by which he might have been guided in the selection of his facts. Rejecting all belief in a providential law by which the individual is linked—through Humanity—to God, he has lost sight of the true greatness of the human race; he stands between the individual and the Infinite without hope or guide; the immensity of the contrast drives him in contemplation of the second to terror. This method leads him to give all that importance to the *external impression* that he has withdrawn from the idea; he allows himself to become passive, and transmits to the reader the image or reflection of each event, as it impressed his *senses;* no more.

What were the causes of the Revolution? why did it burst upon us and convulse the world? why did it assume so profoundly European a character? what was the mission of the Constituent Assembly? how and to what extent did it fulfil that mission? did the first inspiration and initiative spring from the people to the Bourgeoisie, or from the Bourgeoisie to the people? were its earliest efforts directed to the elevation of the democratic element to power, or of a limited aristocracy? were not the tremendous crises of its later years the result of the choice then made? and when the war burst forth—the war of all the European powers leagued against a single people—what were the causes that determined the triumph of

France? through what nucleus or party, in the name of what or whom, was the triumph achieved? what was the mission of the Convention? what was the true significance of the mortal struggle between the Girondins and the Montagne? what gave rise to the reign of terror of 1793? could it have been prevented, and how?

To none of these questions, which crowd upon the mind of all who read and reflect upon the history of that period, does Carlyle's work attempt an answer. Nor in asking them do I demand a complete philosophy of history, but I maintain that a history of that time should at least offer the reader the elements of an answer to these questions. Now the book neither gives you a summary of the resolutions passed by the classes called upon to compose the States General, nor of the legislative acts and institutions founded by the various assemblies, nor any indication of the meaning of the questions which divided the various parties composing the Convention. And why indeed should there be such? keeping in view the unfortunate system which prevails over the writer's mind, why should he ascribe more importance to such things as these than to a hundred others which may or may not form a subject for his history? In the name of what principle among those he accepts shall we reproach him for these omissions? shall it be in the name of the vitality that still endures in many of those elements? Carlyle does not admit any continuity of life; he sees only a series of realities, each of which is cancelled by or cancels the other in turn. In the name of the lessons taught by the study of these events to future generations? No: to him the science of Humanity, as founded upon the tradition of ages, appears almost always an illusion; power belongs solely to irreflective spontaneity, to those whom he calls men of *instinct* and

intuition, and still more to accidental circumstances, and whenever such circumstances happen to be reproduced the same results will follow.

We have no right to be surprised, therefore, if the same man who has given us such splendid, inimitable pages as the descriptions of the 14th July, the 10th August, and the nights of September, has given us naught beyond: it was not in his power. How could he attribute any importance to the study of causes? has he not said (vol. ii., book 3, chap. 6) that one other year of life for Mirabeau—one other year, during which, having sold himself to the court, he would no longer have directed, but sought to repress the revolutionary movement—*would have changed the history of France and of the world?* Does he not again (book 4, chap. 4) say that if Louis XVI. had shown greater firmness when his flight was discovered, and succeeded in passing the frontier, the history of France would have been diverted into a contrary channel? Yes: in his eyes such things as the conquest of right and truth, the life of a people, the destinies of a world, depend upon the few days' longer life of a faithless man, or the momentary firmness of a fugitive king.

Let us then destroy both books and pens, for if this be so, this life and this earth are but the sport of chance. Ah! gladly do I turn aside to listen to the voice of old Homer declaring to us, from his throne of two thousand years' standing, that *the gods permitted the ruin of Ilion and the death of many heroes, in order that Poetry might hand down her lessons for the benefit of the ages to come.*

It is sad—very sad in the case of a man of such singular power as Carlyle—to see the consequences of the absence of a fixed belief as to the law, mission, and destiny of Humanity. Here is an earnest and virtuous man, one

who both understands and practises the duty of self-sacrifice; whose heart is open to every holy emotion or noble affection, and who, nevertheless, is drawn on, without either desiring or perceiving it, by a system which he would repudiate were all its consequences laid bare before him, to instil scepticism or despair into the hearts of his readers. Here is a mind overflowing with poetry, rapid in conception, master of the art of giving form and substance to the infinite varieties and gradations of his thoughts, reduced to mutilate the subject it has selected, to waste those riches upon the insignificant symbol and outward form, and to descend from the high sphere of eternal truth in which its whole power might have been displayed, to that of an imperfect and fugitive *realism*.

The unity of the event he describes is formed, so to speak, of two parts, which may be called the body and the soul. The soul has remained hidden from the eyes of the writer, and consequently the mere body—great as is the power exerted to galvanise it into motion—still presents the aspects of a corpse. In that uprising of twenty-five millions of men, in spite of the registers of the States General—which, from the very outset, keep record of Institutions, Rights, Education, and the triumph of ideas—he sees nothing but the effects of famine, the utterances of physical want. The fête of the Federation in 1790 is to him only a theatrical manifestation; the thunder of the cannon which announced the unification of France to Europe—the echo of which, three years after, repulsed the foreigner from her frontier—is to him but meaningless and empty noise. In a revolution which even yet causes the soil of Europe to tremble beneath the footsteps of her masters, he sees naught but the denial of a gigantic lie, a mere work of destruction, a huge ruin. The positive side of the fact—

the fulfilment, in the political sphere, of that which Christianity had fulfilled through the Reformation in the moral sphere, the elevation of the human *individual* to freedom, emancipation, and self-consciousness, in readiness for the approaching transfusion of the actual into the New Epoch, the first rays of which even now illumine the horizon—remains sealed to him. Like Goethe, his master, he has *contemplated*, not *felt* life.

IV.

I HAVE frequently had occasion to name Goethe in the course of these pages. In fact, the evil genius of Goethe hovers over the trilogy of Carlyle, and many times as I read I could fancy I saw the chilling glance and Mephistophelian smile of the man whose thoughts and interests were simply scientific even in the field of Argonne; and upon whose ear the sound of the cannonade that opened the mighty war between Kings and Peoples struck merely—Carlyle himself repeats this—as a noise, "*curious enough, as if it were compounded of the humming of tops, the gurgling of water, and the whistle of birds.*"

To the influence of Goethe we may trace the tone of irony used in describing the struggles of a nation which was then combating for us all; as well as the satirical jokes introduced into the narrative of grave events, such as the night of the 4th August,* and in speaking

* "A memorable night, this 4th of August: dignitaries, temporal and spiritual, peers, archbishops, parliament-presidents, each outdoing the other in patriotic devotedness, and successively to throw their (untenable) possessions on the altar of the fatherland. With louder and louder *vivats*—for, indeed, it is after dinner too—they abolish tithes, seignorial dues, gabelle," etc. (Chap. 2.)

of the members of the Constituent Assembly.* To the influence of Goethe we may ascribe the constant disposition to crush the human being by contrasting and comparing him with the Infinite, as if the true greatness of man did not consist precisely in his *consciousness* of the Infinite which surrounds him without impeding his *action*; as if the Eternity which is before and behind us were not also *within* us; as if from high above the earth we tread a voice did not reach us from time to time, bidding us: *Onward, in action, in faith, and in the consciousness of thy dignity. God has confided to thee a mission here below; has promised to elevate thee step by step toward Him.*†

I do not fail to recognise the amount of good that must infallibly spring from Carlyle's work, and if I do not enlarge upon it here, it is simply owing to lack of space, and the duty of thinking first of what may be useful to others in my remarks, rather than of the pleasure I should myself feel in holding up its beauties to admiration. None think more highly of Carlyle's writings than I, and had I space to enumerate his merits at length, I should find subject for encomium in much that even his greatest admirers disapprove, and point out, as elements of new vitality and vigour in the language, certain semi-Saxon, semi-German

* "In such manner labour the national deputies; perfecting their theory of irregular verbs," etc. (Chap 2.)

† In speaking thus of Goethe, I am influenced by no spirit of reaction, but by a profound conviction, that neither from the principles nor sentiments of that great genius—perhaps the greatest of the epoch now closed—can we derive inspiration to lead us in the epoch to come. Goethe is like a magnificent tree growing on the confines of two worlds, marvellous to behold, but fatal to all who rest beneath its shadow. From Goethe we may find materials of deep and useful study, not of example.

modes of expression peculiarly his own, containing the germs of a renovation of style which will help to form that of many writers to follow after him. But it appears to me to be more useful now to point out the sad but inevitable results of a false system even in a mind of such power. There is profit for us in the very errors of a writer like Carlyle.

The times are grave. The mortal breath of scepticism has chilled and withered too many youthful minds born for better things, and sooner or later such writers as Carlyle cannot but feel remorse for having added to this evil. In the face of the crisis now threatening Europe, and the grave events coming upon us, history—if unable to assume any higher office—may at least be made a commentary upon the noble words of Thraseas: *Specta* juvenis . . . *en ea tempora natus es quibus firmare animum expedit constantibus exemplis.*

I have written these remarks with my thoughts full of the times that are coming upon us. Carlyle will pardon my frankness, and even in the few words of reproach I have ventured to utter, see only a fresh proof of the hopes which, in common with so many others, I cherish with regard to him.

ON THE MINOR WORKS OF DANTE.

(*First published in the "Foreign Quarterly Review."*)

WITHIN the last few years the study of Dante has received a new impulse upon the Continent. In Germany there have been at least four translations in succession, two in *terza rima*, by Kannegiesser (1832), and by Streckfuss (1834); two, in blank verse, by Prince John of Saxony, and by Kopisch. *La Vita Nuova* and *Le Rime di Dante* have also been translated. Philosophical and elaborately-learned commentaries upon the poem have appeared. Lectures upon the *Commedia* have been given at Berlin, Bonn, Königsberg, Halle, Breslau, and other places. In France, the translation of MM. Delecluze and Brizeux, and many others; in Italy, the *Life of Dante*, by M. Balbo, the writings (Catholic, alas!) of M. Fea, of M. Azzelini, of M. Pianciani;—better still, the many editions of the poem and the *Opere Minori*, so long neglected, all signalise the same fact. After four or five centuries of accumulated labour upon this man, one might fancy that he was born yesterday. On all sides his life, his works, his system, his belief, are industriously subjected to a new analysis. They are interrogated like an oracle in seasons of emergency, with a sort of feverish anxiety, which never has been, and perhaps never will be, paralleled. It is a natural reaction against

Bettinelli, and the indifference of the eighteenth century, says Labitte in the *Révue des Deux Mondes.**

Is it nothing more than this? This random style of assertion with regard to the worship which humanity renders to its great men is too frequent in the *Révue.* It is an explanation I cannot accept, nor would it, I believe, be welcome to those who are now devoting such earnest study to the poet's works.

In all periods of transition men cast these longing glances on the past, and, as it were, strain to their hearts with redoubled affection the image of some one among their mighty dead. Once it was Plato or Aristotle, now it is Bacon or Dante. It is the last effort men make to seize the guiding thread of Tradition, before adventuring upon the unknown regions of the future. From these giants of the realm of Thought, these high priests of the ideal, they demand alike the meaning of that which has been, and a prevision of that which is to be.

Nor do they appeal in vain. Great men are the landmarks of Humanity; they measure its course along the past, and point out the path of the future,—alike historians and prophets. God has endowed them with the faculty of feeling more largely and intensely, and, as it were, of absorbing more than their fellows of that universal life which pervades and interpenetrates all things, and they breathe it out again at every pore. The potent unity of their own minds enables them to grasp the synthesis of that which mediocrity is constrained to analyse and view only in detail; to organise their impressions, reminiscences, and previsions into one harmonious and complete conception; and from a rapid glance at effects, to seize and comprehend their causes, their generating principle. The

* *Biographies et Traducteurs de Dante,* Art. de M. Labitte, 1841.

conscious thought of such men is the unconscious and still inarticulate thought of a whole nation, which it will require future nations to develop; their speech an historical formula, or an intuition of the future. They do not create —God alone creates—but they look forth and discern stars, where our feebler vision recognises only the indistinct brightness of the Milky Way. Their words are frequently unintelligible to their contemporaries; their Thought appears at times to vanish, submerged beneath the waves of the present; but God watches its passage beneath the abyss, until it again emerges in new splendour, fertile of benefit to posterity.

We are just beginning to know this: in past epochs we looked upon the history of literature as the history of individuals alone—flowers uprooted from the soil that nourished them—we considered genius as something mysterious and unintelligible, having no necessary connection with the circumstances surrounding it, *no raison d'etre;—prolem sine matre creatum*—no definite mission or purpose beneficial to succeeding generations. With astonishment and distrust, men saw rise up amongst them one who was not like themselves, but appeared to tower threateningly above them; and according to their own tendencies, as they were good or evil, weak or strong, did they either bow down before him in servile adoration, or hurl against him the anathema and outrage of the barbarian.

In days nearer our own, mankind began to study genius; but without ceasing to regard it as a phenomenon isolated and distinct from the medium, country, or epoch wherein it made its appearance. Instead of endeavouring to grasp the life of genius in its totality, they applied the anatomist's knife to the outward form, the corpse. Of what use to them was the idea of the genius dead? whatever that idea

might have been, was it not past? did it not die with him! When they had viewed his conception and pronounced it a *beautiful dream*, all was said: accustomed to regard it as a thing belonging to an entirely different sphere from their own, they did not even imagine that the idea of genius could ever be reduced to efficacious action through their own labours. What they called criticism was, in fact, the minute pedantic analysis to which they devoted the form or envelope of that idea: an ungrateful, sterile, Sisyphean task, which had to be begun anew every time a new incarnation of genius, arising to prove that the laws of all *form* must be sought in the *idea* or spirit, and that every new idea has laws of its own, overturned the results of their anterior labours.

Nevertheless we did advance, and while proceeding upon our path of progress, and traversing ground which we believed had never been the scene of human labour, it came to pass that we met with deeply-marked traces of travellers who had been there before us, and recognised them as left by those wonderful men whom we had, it is true, admired, but whom we believed to have lived remote from our own road, and regarded but as the apparitions of a day, which had vanished from us the day after, on the path of the Infinite.

From that time our method of studying the works of genius was changed; true criticism arose. We now neither blindly worship nor outrage genius; we endeavour to understand it, and we are learning to love it. We regard the forms it assumes as secondary and perishable phenomena; the idea alone is sacred to us, for it alone has received the baptism of immortal life; and we strive to raise the veil by which the idea is covered. It is, in truth, our own, even as its revealers are of us. The great in genius are still our brothers, though blessed with the only

privilege we may recognise without self-degradation, for it is not the gift of men, but of God. We shall one day rejoin them; one day we shall *realise* in action the truth of which they had been granted prevision in the soul's heaven, and which we gradually comprehend in proportion to the earnestness of our aspiration towards the future.

Great men, like the great scenes of Nature, must be viewed from an eminence. Formerly, only the towering summits of their greatness was visible to us, and, like the highest peaks of the Alps when seen from immediately below, their isolated grandeur was crushing and overwhelming to our spirits; but now, having ourselves reached a height more nearly on a level with them, our vision embraces the intermediate peaks, and comprehends the unity of the chain. It endeavours to grasp it at least, and even that is much.

The thought that burned within the soul of Dante is the same that ferments in the bosom of our own epoch. Every instinct within us points to this truth. It is for this that we gather with new earnestness around his image, as if to place our wavering belief beneath the protection of the vast wings of his genius.

I do not say that the individual belief of each of the writers I have named is identical with that entertained by Dante; but I say that the general idea which gave rise to their labours and towards the realisation of which they are endeavouring to raise up a system of beliefs, is the idea to which Dante consecrated the whole energies of his soul and genius five centuries ago.

Whether Catholics, Guelphs, or Ghibellines, these biographers and commentators, though enchained by the formulæ of the past, and incapable themselves of foreshadowing or comprehending the new faith which the times

are maturing, nevertheless betray, by their labours and aspirations, an instinct of coming renovation, a yearning after a moral unity, founded upon some great, harmonious, organic, authoritative idea; a sense of the deep need of some comprehensive, religious, political, and artistic *unity*, to strengthen and multiply those powers of intelligence and will which are now frittered away in the pursuit of material interest; an undefined aspiration after the ideal now hidden beneath the materialism of private aims, and by the superficial, venal, and corrupt literature by which we have been overrun during half a century. Dante is to them what he is to us, one of the purest worshippers of the ideal mankind has known, and one of the rarest intellects, both for innate vigour and universality of conception, that has existed for our good from the days of Charlemagne down to Napoleon. It is for this that they write with earnestness, and that we listen to them always with patience, sometimes with affection. The secret of Dante is the secret of our own epoch, and in it we are one with them.

Have these writers revealed this secret? Have they grasped every aspect of that soul, so deeply loving, yet severe, so open to every emotion,* yet so constantly sad; that soul which reflected within itself heaven, earth, and hell, things finite and things infinite by turns? No: each of them appears to have had but a fragmentary and incomplete view of him. One has made him a Guelph; another a Ghibelline; nearly all of them have endeavoured to prove him an orthodox Catholic.

Now Dante was neither a Catholic, a Guelph, nor a Ghibelline; he was a Christian and an Italian.

* Io che per mia natura
Transmutabile son per tutte guise.
—*Par.* 5.

All of these writers have caught some outlines of his mind; all have laboured upon some accessories of the Parent Idea by which it was directed; all have studied, with more or less impartiality, the age in which he lived, the men and things that lived and moved around him, his *Opere Minori* hitherto neglected; and by this means they have opened up the only way through which the individuality both of the Poet and the Man—so long profaned and mutilated by the wretched sectarians of the dead letter—can be rationally judged.

For fifty years Italian literati busied themselves in writing dissertations on the *Pape*—tearing each other to pieces about two different readings*—both equally absurd—about the greater or less harmony in this or that verse, while an ocean of harmony rolls its gigantic waves throughout the whole poem. Now, however, Continental Romanticism has condemned this race of syllable-splitters to silence, and may the dust lie lighter upon their tombs than upon their volumes.

Our present writers occupy themselves less about the shadow than the substance; study the whole more than the parts; the idea, rather than the form in which it is clothed. Instead of adding another commentary to the thousand already existing, they endeavour to give us a life of the Poet. Yet a few more such efforts, and this grand

* Upon the *accuja*, for instance, of the Florentine editions of 1481, and the attuja of other editions (*Pur.* c. 33, v. 48). Accuja and attuja mean nothing, either in Italian or English, or any existing language. They are evidently two errors of the copyists. Abbuja (darkens) is undoubtedly the word Dante wrote, and yet not one of the thousand and one annotators has substituted it for their barbarism. *Foscolo's* edition (Rolandi, London 1842-3) alone gives the true reading.

figure of the Christian era which hovered indistinctly above our cradle, will be fully revealed to us, illumined with a purer glory, to receive the tribute, not of our admiration only—*that* Dante has compelled for five centuries—but of our love, the love for which his soul thirsted—which none gave during his lifetime, and which even yet, for want of better knowledge, is but an instinctive love, and bestowed, as it were, by halves.

Poor Dante! he has been more injured by the admiration of pedants than by the hatred of his contemporaries, an admiration which lost sight of the conception, to dwell on the magnificence of its envelope, which worshipped the fire but neglected the altar, which forgot the Thinker and remembered only the Poet. Yet what is Poetry but the faculty of symbolisation consecrated to the service of a great idea?

As in the case of Milton, the grandeur of the great poem threw the minor works into the shade. The majesty of the cupola has caused the lower part of the edifice to be forgotten. Lightly regarded by Dante's contemporaries,* they did not meet with a more favourable reception even when the press gave them a wider circulation. The age of

* Forgetting that Dante in his *Convito*, written during the last years of his life, entirely confirms his *Vita Nuova*. "Se nella presente opera la quale è Convito nominato, più virilmente si trattasse che nella Vita Nuova, non intendo pero a quella inparte alcuna derogare, ma maggiormente giovare per questa a quella." (If the present work, which is denominated the *Convito*, treats of subjects of more gravity, yet I do not intend to derogate in any wise from that, but rather to render service to it by this.)

Boccaccio, in his *Life of Dante*, affirms that Dante blushed for his first work, and others speak lightly of those detached pieces which Dante in the great poem causes Casella, the friend of his youth, to sing to him with so much sweetness and love.

Patriots was extinct; that of the Thinkers* not yet arisen. High above the torrent of pedantic, Jesuitical, academic literature which overflowed Italy, towered the *Divina Commedia*; traditionally admired—the omnipotent eternal spirit of poetry within it overmastered every human obstacle—but the minor works were nearly overwhelmed in the flood. New editions of them were very rare; and they were, besides—owing to the custom of servilely following one MS. copy without confronting it with others—so disfigured by errors, that the *Convito*, for instance, remained until the labours of Monti, and others, nearly unintelligible. To this may be added the barbarous Latinity of some, and the wearisome scholastic form of all.

Besides this, men, instead of studying such minor works as are incontestably proved to belong to Dante, amused themselves on the faith of some spurious *codice*, or of God knows what, by attributing to him others, evidently forged, and which are, nevertheless, quoted even in the present day by his biographers. I am not speaking of the *Disputationes de Aqua et Terra*—of a Dissertation *Upon the Nature of Fishes*—of the *Life and Miracles of Saint Torello*, and other trash, attributed to him by Father Negri,

* The first edition of the *Convito* is that of 1490, by Buonacorsi, Florence. A Titanic Italian conception, like that of Dante, could not in these times be—I will not say *felt*, but even *divined*. Italian civilisation, which, instead of spreading civilisation over the world, remained concentrated, like the life-blood at its heart, Florence—already felt the approach of adverse destiny to come. *La Monarchia*, although twice translated by Jacopo del Rossa, and in 1467 by Marsilio Ficino, was first published at Basle by Gio. Opporino in 1559, twenty-nine years after the last ray of Italian liberty had been extinguished by Charles V. and Clement VII. The book, *De Vulgari Eloquio*, appeared at Vicenza in 1592 in a translated form; the Latin text in 1577 at Paris.

Father Soldani, Valvassori, and such-like—they were soon rejected as impostures—I am speaking of forgeries which have obtained credit among literary men, which have been received, one cannot conceive how, by the writers named at the beginning of this article, and which lead to a false appreciation of the life and opinions of Dante; of the inventions of Mario Filelfo, an impudent charlatan and speculator, if ever there was one; I allude to the *Credo*, to the *Magnificat*, to the *Seven Penitential Psalms*, and other sacred poems, which are to be found in almost all the editions of Dante's poems—to a host of compositions, sonnets, and other things belonging to Dante of Majano, his contemporary; to another Dante, an obscure poet of the fifteenth century; perhaps to two of the sons of Dante himself—any way, not to him—and yet inserted among the *Rime of one Dante.**

If to all these sources of error we add the audacious lies introduced in the *Life of Dante* by Filelfo and others—the anecdotes invented by Franco Sacchetti and other novelists, and received as history—the accusations insinuated against Dante by Popish and Jesuitical writers—the gratuitous

* Among the poems attributed to Dante by the Venetian editor of 1518, and by nearly all others after him, we must reject the canzone, "Perchè nel tempo rio," "Dacchè ti piace, Amore, ch'io ritorni," "L'uom che conosce è degno ch'aggia ardire," "L'alta speranza che mi reca amore," "Oimè lasso quelle treccie bionde—Non spero che giammai per mia salute," "Io non pensava che lo cor giammai," "Giovane donna deutro al cuor mi siede," "L'alta virtù che si ritrasse al cielo." Of these several are by Cino. The sonnets, "Dagli occhi belli di questa mia dama," "Un di si venne a noi melancolia," "Messer Brunetto," etc., and "Quel che voi siete amico, vostro manto," "Non conoscendo, amico, il vostro nome," "Tu che stanzi lo colle ombroso e fresco," "Io ho tutte le cose ch'io non voglio," "Lode di Dio, e della madre pura," "Quando veggio Bechina corruccrata," O madre di Virtute, luce eterna," and twenty

affirmations about his travels and his friendships by a servile tribe of writers, working in the hire of some patrician families, whom they seek in all ways to flatter—we shall easily understand why, after all these labours, the life of Dante still remains to be written, and that his true likeness can scarcely be discerned through the clouds and darkness which centuries have accumulated over it.

A man well known here in England, and whose name, synonymous with literary independence and incorruptible political integrity, is revered by all the youth of Italy, though little mentioned by her authors—Ugo Foscolo—did much to dissipate these clouds of error. Stern and somewhat aggressive in temperament, his mind nourished and fortified by severe study; little calculated for laying new foundations, but endowed with mighty faculties for destruction, he effectually overthrew (except for those who bow down blindly before precedents) a whole edifice of errors which barred the way to the study of Dante. In his different writings, especially in his "Discorso sul Testo*" etc., he cleared the ground for a better understanding of

more at least ought to be equally rejected; also the four lines, "L'amor che mosse già l'eterno Padre," and the epigram, "O tu che sprezzi la nona figura." Among the hundred and fifty compositions attributed to Dante, there are only about seventy that belong to him. Dionisi did much to expunge the rest. M. Fraticelli, the editor and illustrator of the best edition of the *Opere Minori*, has done still more: his criticism is almost always just and erudite. I regret, however, that his edition, through some unaccountable timidity, retains *all* the poems, whether genuine or not. Many persons will not read the notes which form an isolated portion of the work, and will persist in the old errors.

* This "Discorso," published in 1825 by Pickering, was to have formed the first volume of an edition of the *Commedia*, which was suspended by the death of Foscolo. This edition has recently been published by Rolandi, 20 Berners Street, who purchased the MSS. from Pickering.

the *Commedia* and the Poet. He confuted historical anachronisms, affirmations taken up on the faith of an academy or a *savant*—systems dictated by the vanity of a town or a patrician palace. He submitted authority to the test of rational examination; he drove out the profane from the vestibule of the temple, and there he stopped short. He was too much tinged with the materialism or scepticism of his time to constitute a priest of the god; but it is imperative on anyone who shall undertake to write the life of Dante after him, deeply to study the labours of Foscolo, and follow the rules of criticism he has laid down.

MM. Ozanam, Balbo, and D' Artaud still persist in the old errors whenever it suits them to do so. M. Ozanam sees Beatrice dying "dans tout l' eclat de la virginité," in spite of the *Bici filiāe suāe, et uxori D. Simonis de Bardis*, of the paternal will. He declares that Dante understood Greek, in the face of the testimony of Dante himself, when he speaks in his *Convito* of the Translations of Aristotle, on the strength of a sonnet, "Tu che stanzi lo colle ombroso e fresco," which is evidently not by Dante, but which he attributes to him on the authority of Pelli and his assistants, without the smallest plausible argument in favour of its assumed paternity. He consoles himself for the faults which to him, as a Catholic, appear to disfigure the life of the poet, by declaring that he showed signs of repentance by leaving behind him a magnificent Hymn to the Virgin, and desiring to be clothed upon his bier in the habit of the order of St. Francis. Now, the sonnet "O Madre di Virtute, luce eterna" to which M. Ozanam alludes, though attributed to Dante by Corbinelli, belongs to Monte Andrea, or some other obscure poet: and as to the religious habit in which the Franciscan fathers are said by Taraboschi to have muffled him, it is one of those stories which in the present

day any tolerably well-read man would be ashamed to quote. Dante was married, and a father, and he has left it written in his *Convito* that it is not the habit of St. Bennet, of St. Augustine, St. Francis, or St. Dominic that constitutes a religious life, and that God requires only the religion of the heart.* In like manner, with M. Ozanam, M. Balbo complacently gives the anecdote of the friar's habit; he believes in the genuineness of *le rime sacre*, and in all the prosaic ribald lines with which Quadrio, Rigoli, Crescimbeni, Frotta, and others like them, have arbitrarily loaded the memory of Dante. He professes clearly to discern the style, the versification, and the reminiscences of the poet. He swears by all the anecdotes which it has pleased Franco Sacchetti and Cinzio Giraldi to introduce into their tales. He believes in the four embassies, in the history of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, in all that it has pleased Mario Filelfo to set down to the account of Dante, forgetting that the quotations which this same Filelfo impudently makes from prose works as by Dante, no one else can discover in them. But above all others in vigorous powers of blind belief is M. le Chevalier Artaud de Montor, "membre de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, de l'Académie de la Crusca, de l'Académie de Gottingue," and of ten others, the names of whom he fondly cites here and there in his notes. He recites, on the faith of Philelphus, the beginning of a letter, "Beatitudinis tuæ sanctitas nihil potest cogitare pollutum, quæ, vices in terris gerens Christi, totius est misericordiæ sedes, veræ pietatis exemplum," etc.;

"Che non torna a religione pur quelli che a San Benedetto, a Sant' Agostino e a San Franceso, e a San Dominico, si fa d' abito e di vita simile, ma eziandio a buona e vera religione, si puó tornare, in matrimonio stando; chè Iddio non volle religioso di noi, se non il cuore."—*Convito.*

written, he declares, by Dante, and to whom?—to that same Boniface VIII. against whom he inveighs bitterly no less than nine times in the poem. In the warmth of his zeal as a French Catholic and royalist, he is also tempted to believe that not only Brunetto Latini, but Dante himself, helped to draw up the bull for the canonisation of Louis IX. by Boniface. He is astonished at the first sonnet by Dante, "A ciascun alma presa e gentil core," composed, he assures us, when he was nine years old,* although he might have convinced himself, if he had read the *Vita Nuova* with a little more attention, that Dante wrote it at eighteen. He liberally attributes to Dante (p. 485) four lines, "*L'amor che mosse già l'eterno Padre*," written for a picture in the great council-hall at Venice, painted by Guariento forty-four years after Dante was dead. He quotes at random, without discernment, or a shadow of critical skill, alike from authors worthy of credit and imbecile compilers —Philelphus and Tiraboschi, Muratori and Fra Giacomo da Serravalle—they are all one to him.

I have not for many years seen a book (635 pages!) so utterly devoid of erudition, and so full of academical bombast, of errors diffuse, confused, and involved. Yet this book has been cried up in France as an important and deeply-learned production, and it has, I believe, been honoured by an Italian translation.

All this would have been no great matter in my eyes, if these errors had only concerned mere unimportant matters of fact, and did not tend to falsify our conception of the Man; of the inward life, the soul, and the faith of Dante. He might appear more extraordinary, but not greater, if he had composed a sonnet at nine years of age; and he would

* The author of the *Curiosities of Literature* has fallen into the same error, vol. vi.

have been none the less powerful as a Poet, even if in some weak moment he had written some of the wretched verses which ignorant compilers have attributed to him. But the errors I have cited touch the nature of the man. In consequence of the Guelphic prejudices of most of these writers, the *man* is made to appear before us as incomplete, inconsequent, weak, unstable, and irascible; objective rather than subjective; yielding to circumstances instead of dominating or creating them, and altogether devoid of that potent unity which is the distinguishing sign of the highest Genius, and especially of Dante. The adoration, at times unreflecting, which these writers profess for the Poet, contrasts strangely with a certain tone of ill-concealed compassion and excuse for the errors of the *man*, which is an outrage alike upon history and moral truth. They set themselves to explain to us, in a tone of paternal indulgence, how Dante was first a Guelph and then a Ghibelline, how he was urged in opposite directions by the influence of eager and violent passions, by the fury of faction and the weakness inseparable from human nature They quote from Boccaccio, in whom the novelist at times predominates over the historian, the anecdote of Dante's throwing stones at some adversaries of Ghibellines. All of them, from the writer in the *Edinburgh Review* * down to Cesaro Balbo,† describe him as choleric, harsh, obstinate, and vain.

Such general assertions, with the false anecdotes engrafted upon his life, representing him as changing both his political opinions and conduct without sufficient reason,

* In every line of the *Divina Commedia* "we discern the asperity produced by Pride struggling with Majesty."—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 84.

† "Si fece per superbia edira Ghibelino. Il gran peccato di Dante fu l'ira."—Vol. ii., c. I.

tend to destroy the unity of this powerful individuality, which stands before us as the type of a whole nation, solemn and grand as that nation's sorrows, and incline the numerous class whose study of Dante has never gone beyond the *Inferno*, to accept the accusation of sombre ferocity and hatred which, during the last six years, has been frequently cast by a writer, evidently of diseased mind,* against a man whose soul was so full of life that he placed morality above all science; who declared that Philosophy and Beauty consist in the harmony of the virtues; who proclaimed that Genius itself is unable to attain certain heights of knowledge unless it is assisted by Love;† and who in the *Convito* defines philosophy as "*un amoroso uso di sapienza*" (a loving use of knowledge).

Thank God, all these accusations are false. In Dante we may venerate Genius without fear or mistrust. The life of Dante has yet to be written; the writers of the present day have only prepared the way for a biographer still to come.

The bare facts of Dante's life, upon which I cannot dwell here, need not occupy much of his future biographer's time. Many facts, many dates, which have been the subject of many pages of discussion, will, I fear, ever remain uncertain; and so, whatever Bevenuti d' Imola may say, will remain the places where he first studied, his masters—amongst whom we are only certain of Brunetto Latini,—the friends whom he loved—if we except Guido Cavalcanti, Giotto, Casella, the musician; Charles Martel, king of Hungary; Forese, brother to Corso Donati; his sister, Piccarda, and perhaps one or two others, whom he himself names in his poem. The dates and places of his pilgrimages across Italy, from his exile in 1302 until his

* W. S. Landor. † *Par.* vii.

death in 1321, which erudite writers have contrived to complicate still further by dint of random conjectures, can with difficulty be established.

But the life, the true life of Dante, does not lie in the series of the material facts of his existence. The life of Dante consists in the sufferings and aspirations of his soul; in its dominant impulses; in the ceaseless development of the idea which was at once his guide, inspiration, and consolation; in his *belief* as a *man* and as an *Italian*.

Nor is this to be discovered by consulting the biographers and annotators of Dante; nor by rummaging the archives of monasteries, and tracing the precise footsteps of his journeys throughout Italy with M. Ampère. It must be done by penetrating as deeply and earnestly as possible into the *medium*, the element in which Dante lived; and then by the study of his works, the minor works especially, which were visibly designed by him as a preparation for the Poem itself, the crown of the edifice. And in this last, if read in a spirit of reverence, meditation, and love, the writer will find all he can require.

Both as a *man* and as a *poet*, Dante stands the first in modern times; or, more correctly speaking, the first of all times (since there are none among the ancients who resemble him); he is at the head of that series of great men which, numbering in its ranks Michael Angelo, has been concluded in our own day by Byron; while another parallel series, initiated (Æschylus excepted) by the Greeks, and numbering in its ranks Shakespeare, was concluded by Goethe.

The men of the mighty *subjective* race who form the first category, stamp the impress of their own individuality—like conquerors—both upon the actual world and upon the world of their own creation, and derive the life they make

manifest in their works, either from the life *within* themselves, or from that life of the *future* which, prophet-like, they foresee.

The great men of the second category reflect the images of the external world like a tranquil lake, and, as it were, cancel their own individuality to identify their soul successively with each of the *objects* that pass across the surface. Each are equally powerful: the last more especially call forth our admiration; the first more especially awaken our affection. In both series great struggles have to be endured, and great victories are won; but while the first, seared and scarred with wounds, bear about them the deep and visible traces of the combat, it is not so with the second. One might almost fancy that the first were gods, who had descended to strive and suffer with us; and that the second were men who had soared above us, to contemplate and enjoy with the gods.

In all the works of Dante the life of struggle and suffering he led is revealed to us, and we follow his steps with beating hearts. He is one of the few of whom it may be said, in the spirit of the beautiful Catholic legend, that they leave their image upon their winding-sheet.

The accurate edition of Dante's *Opere Minori* which Fraticelli has published is the best biography I know of their author. The idea which Dante pursued during his whole life finds its philosophical expression in the *Convito;* political, in the *Monarchia;* literary, in the treatise *De Vulgari Eloquio;* political and religious, in the *Commedia.**

The *Vita Nuova* is a thing apart. Is is the perfume of

* To the study of these works must be added that of the seven letters of Dante which remain to us. Two of these, that to the princes and peoples of Italy, one to Guido da Polenta (dubious), were only translated in the fifteenth century. The others—to Cino da Pistoia, to

Dante's early youth; the dream of love which God grants to His privileged children to teach them never to despair of life, nor to doubt or forget the immortality of the soul. Written probably when he was eight-and-twenty, he relates in it the story of his love for Beatrice, both in prose and verse. It is an inimitable little book, full of thoughts sweet, sad, pure, gentle, and delicate; loving as the note of the dove, ethereal as the perfume of flowers; the pen, which in later years became as a sword in the hands of Dante, here traces the image of Beatrice and of his own love, as tenderly as the pencil of Raphaelle himself. There are pages in the *Vita Nuova* in prose—those, for instance, in which he relates the death of Beatrice—far superior to Boccaccio in style and language; and sonnets far beyond the most admired of Petrarch. I know no one but Shelley who could have translated them; and at the present day I think the task of translating the *Vita Nuova* could only be confided to the heart and mind of a woman.

There have been loud disputes, from the days of Canon Biscioni down to M. Rossetti, about the real existence of such a person as Beatrice. How, from the mystic style of the work and from some ambiguous expressions put there as a prelude to the poem, learned men have been able to bring themselves—in spite of the most positive evidence to the contrary—to doubt the existence of "Bice," or to

the Emperor Henry VIII., to the Italian Cardinals, to the Florentine friend, and to Can della Scala—are in Latin. Professor Charles Witte, who was the first who gave an edition of them at Padua in 1827, announced in 1838, in his German journal, the discovery of seven other letters by Dante, in a MS. given in 1622 by Maximilian of Bavaria to Gregory XV. But the manuscript was stolen from him, and has remained from that time inaccessible. Other letters by Dante, quoted by his old biographers, cannot now be found.

admit two distinct beings, the Beatrice of the poet and the Beatrice of the theologian—thus destroying that progressive continuity which is the peculiar characteristic of the genius and the love of Dante—I cannot imagine.

It is precisely this endeavour to place a link between the real and the ideal, between the symbol and the invisible, between earth and heaven, which converts the love of Dante into something which has no analogy among mortals; a work of purification and idealisation that stands alone, to point out the mission of woman and of love here below. She who inspired Dante on earth becomes his guardian angel in heaven. In the face of the mighty love kindled in the heart of the poet, death itself disappeared. The bier, as Jean Paul says, is the cradle of heaven. Dry your eyes, you who weep; the souls who have loved you, and whom you have loved to the last moment of their earthly existence, are appointed, in reward of their love and yours, to watch over you, to protect you, to elevate you one step nearer to God in the scale of your progressive transformations. Have you never, in some solemn moment, been visited by an intuition, a thought of genius, an unwonted and brighter ray from the Eternal Truth? It was, perhaps, the breath of the being whom you have loved the most, and who has the most loved you on earth, passing across your burning forehead. When, soul-sickened by delusion and deception, you have shivered beneath the icy touch of Doubt, have you never felt a sudden glow of love and faith arise within your heart? It was, perhaps, the kiss of the mother you wept as lost, while she smiled at your error.

The love of Dante was as the prelude to these previsions of our own day. It is not the pagan love, the joyous, thoughtless, sensual love of Tibullus or Anacreon; it is

a love full of sadness; tormented by the sense of and the aspiration towards an ideal it is unable to reach. At an age when most men dream only of hope and pleasure, the first love-dream of Dante tells of death; the death of Beatrice. He never describes her beauty, unless it be her fair hair, and the expression of her face: *ove non puote alcun mirarla fiso** ("whence none can gaze upon her steadfastly") he hastens to add. Nor is it the love of the age of Chivalry. Chivalry—owing to the instinct of equality innate in our people, which rendered them mistrustful of the feudal origin of the institution—never struck firm root in Italy. It cannot be likened to the love of Petrarch—a love which often assumes a divine aspect from the charm of its expression, but is querulous and restless, like all love essentially earthly in its aim; full of agitation during Laura's life, and lamented or accepted as a sort of inevitable misfortune at her death.† The love of Dante is calm, resigned, and submissive: death does not convert it into a remorse; it sanctifies it. Far different from the love which in our age of transition has deserved the name of *l'egoisme à deux personnes*, a jealous and convulsive passion, half-pride, half-thirst of enjoyment, which narrows the sphere of our activity and causes us to forget our duties both towards our Country and Humanity—the love of Dante does not dry up the other affections; it fosters and fertilises them all; strengthens the sense of duty and enlarges the heart to embrace the whole earth. He says in the *Vita Nuova*, "Whensoever she appeared before me, I had no enemy left on earth; the flame of charity kindled within

* The song, *Io miro i biondi*, etc., from which, if I recollect aright, Mrs. Jameson draws her portrait of Beatrice in her *Loves of the Poets*, is more than doubtful.

† *Donne che avete*, etc.

me caused me to forgive all who had ever offended me."* The power of further advance upon the path of purity and improvement instilled into him by Beatrice is the constant theme of his verses.†

Dante's love is love such as Schiller has conceived in his *Don Carlos*; such as the future will know. When Beatrice—whose affection for the Poet may be inferred from the reproaches she addresses to him in the 31st canto of the *Paradiso* taken together with the canzone E m'incresce di me, etc.‡—was married, Dante fell seriously ill; and when she died not long after, his life was in danger. *He had*, says Boccaccio, *become a thing wild and savage to*

* "Quando ella appariva da parte alcuna nullo nemico mi rimanea, anzi mi giungea una fiamma di caritade la quale mi facea perdonare a qualunque m'avesse offeso."

† "E qual soffrisse di starla e vedere
Divenia nobil cosa o si morià."

(While any who endures to gaze on her,
Must either be made noble or else die.)
—*Rossetti's Translation.*

. . . "Le ha Dio per maggior grazia dato,
Che non può mal finir che le ha parlato."

(All this virtue owns she, by God's will,
Who speaks with her can never come to ill.)
—*Rossetti's Translation.*

‡ "Noi darem pace a voi diletto
Diceano agli occhi miei
Quei della bella donna
Alcuna volta."

(We will bring peace, beloved, to thy heart,
The lovely lady's eyes at times
So spake to mine.)

The disproportion of their fortunes was perhaps the reason why they were not married to each other.

look upon. But he felt that the death of Beatrice had imposed new and solemn duties upon him; that he was bound to strive to render himself more worthy of her. He resolved to love her to the last day of his existence, and to bestow upon her an immortality on earth,* and he kept the vow. His union with Gemma Donati does not appear to have been, as others have asserted, unhappy;† but calm and cold, and rather the accomplishment of a social duty than an irresistible impulse of the heart. The brief weakness of his fancies for Gentucca and Madonna Pietra passed like clouds over his

* "Apparve a me una mirabile visione, nella quale io vidi cose che mi fecero proporre di non dir più di questa benedetta insino a tanto ch'io non potessi più degnamente trattare di lei; e di venire a ciò studio quanto posso siccome ella sa, veramente. Sicchè se piacere sara di colui, a cui tutte le cose vivono, che la mia vita per alquanti anni persevera, spero di dire di lei quello che mai non fu detto di alcuna."—*Vita Nuova.*

(It was given to me to behold a very wonderful vision, wherein I saw things which determined me that I would say nothing further of this most blessed one, until such time as I could discourse more worthily concerning her. And to this end I labour all I can, as she well knoweth. Wherefore if it be His pleasure through whom is the life of all things that my life continue with me for a few years, it is my hope that I shall yet write concerning her what hath not before been written of any woman.)—*Rossetti's Translation.*

† The lines of the poem, which are often quoted,

"La fera moglie più che altro mi nuoce,"

have nothing which shows the smallest allusion of Dante to his wife. The other proof that is endeavoured to be deduced from his silence goes for nothing. From a sentiment of delicacy, Dante never mentions either his wife or children, whom he loved, and whom he called round him as soon as circumstances permitted. Throughout the whole poem there is but one reminiscence of his domestic affections: it is the "Benedetta colei che in te s'incinse," *Inf.* viii., which recalls his mother.

soul's horizon; above them shone the serene heaven, illuminated by the undying image of Beatrice, the sun of his inward life. He gave her name to one of his daughters, whom Boccaccio afterwards saw when a nun at Ravenna. The memory of Beatrice was his inspiration, not only in the magnificent pages which he consecrated towards the close of his life in the great poem; but in that worship of Woman which pervades it from beginning to end. In his love of every form of Beauty, in his incessant yearning after inward purity, Beatrice was the muse of his intellect, the angel of his soul, the consoling spirit sustaining him in exile and in poverty, throughout the cheerless wanderings of the most storm-beaten existence we know.

And another thought sustained him—the *aim* toward which he directed all the energy Love had aroused within him, and on this I specially insist, because, strange to say, it is either neglected or misunderstood by all who busy themselves about Dante. This *aim* is the National Aim—the same desire that vibrates instinctively in the hearts of twenty-five millions of men between the Alps and the sea; and it is the secret of the immense influence exercised by the name of Dante over the Italians. This idea, and the almost superhuman constancy with which he laboured towards its triumph, render Dante the most perfect incarnation of the life of his Nation; and, nevertheless, it is precisely upon the subject of this idea that his biographers display the greatest uncertainty. Thus Balbo, who in one page calls Dante the most Italian of Italians, when in the next he endeavours to prove it, hesitates, and loses himself in indecision; then, misled by his Guelphic tendencies, he writes (chap. v. 2) that "Dante forsook the party of his ancestors, the party of the people and of Italian independence, for that of

foreign domination," and he pleads for him, Heaven knows what extenuating circumstances! M. Artaud bravely cuts the human unity in twain, assumes that poetry and politics must pursue different paths, and concludes with an Academic peroration—"*Non, Homère de la peninsule Ausonienne, retourne à la Poesie, abjure la politique, science dans laquelle tu te montrais variable, indécis, non par vileté, mais par colère.*"

M. Lenormant goes so far (God forgive him, I cannot) as to reproach him with the glorious letter in which he refused the amnesty which had been offered to him upon dishonourable conditions.*

Others ignore the National faith of Dante as if it were a thing inferior to his poetical conceptions. Such writers would see no poetry in Moses ascending Mount Sinai amid the storm, to bring down laws for his people.

This idea of his Nation's greatness illumines every page of Dante; it is the ruling thought of his genius. Never man loved his country with more exalted and fervid love; never man had more sublime and

* I give the letter entire although it is well known, for it seems to me that at the present day, wherein our mortal disease is lack of moral courage, it is well to repeat it to the Italians:—"In literis vestris et reverentia debita et affectione receptis, quam repatriatio mea curæ sit vobis ex animo grata mente ac diligenti animadiversione concepi: etenim tanto me districtius obligasti quanto rarius exules invenire amicos contingit. Ad illarum vero significata respondeo, et (si non catenus, qualiter forsan pusillanimitas appeteret aliquorum) ut sub examine vestri consilii, ante judicium ventiletur, affectuose deposco. Ecce igitur quod per litteras vestri meique nepotis, nec non aliorum quam plurium amicorum significatum est mihi per ordinamentum nuper factum Florentiæ super absolutione bannitorum, quod si solvere vellem certam pecuniæ quantitatem, vellemque pati notam oblationis, et absolvi possem, et redire ad præsens. In quo quidem duo ridenda et male præconsiliata sunt, pater; dico male præconsiliata

glorious visions of the destinies in store for her. They who see in him a Guelph or a Ghibelline do but grovel round the base of the monument he sought to raise to Italy. I cannot undertake to discuss here the question as to the feasibility of Dante's ideas about Italy: the future will decide that point. What I seek to show is the *aim* he had in view, so as to afford materials upon which they who hereafter write his life may form their judgment. This I shall do as rapidly as possible, upon the authority of the *Convito* and the treatise *De Monarchia.*

This, then, was the faith by which, in the thirteenth century, the soul of Dante was sustained and upheld:

God is one. The universe is a thought of God;* the

per illos qui talia expresserunt, nam vestræ litteræ, discretius et consultius clausullatæ, nihil de talibus continebant. Estne ista revocatio gloriosa, qua Dantes Allighierius revocatus ad patriam, per trilustrium fere perpessus exilium! Hæc me meruit innocentia manifesta quibuslibet! Hæc sudor et labor continuatus in studio? Absit a vero philosophiæ domestico, temeraria terreni cordis humilitas, ut mor cujusdam scioli et aliorum infamium, quasi vinctus, ipse se patiatur offerri! Absit a viro prædicante justitiam, ut, perpessus injuriam, inferentibus, velut benemerentibus, pecuniam suam solvat! Non est hæc via redeundi ad patriam, pater mi; sed si alia, per vos, aut deinde per alios invenitur, quæ famæ Dantis atque honori non deroget, illam non lentis passibus acceptabo. Quod si per nullam talem Florentia introitur, nunquam Florentiam introibo. Quidni? nonne solis astrorumque specula ubique conspiciam? Nonne dulcissimas veritates potero speculari ubique sub cœlo, ni prius inglorium, immo ignominiosum populo, Florentinæque civitati me reddam? Quippe nec panis deficiet." (*Written in* 1316 *to a Florentine friend.*)

* "Cum totum universum nihil aliud sit, quam vestigium quoddam divinæ bonitatis."—*Monarchia*, i.

> "Ciò che non more e ciò che può morire
> Non è, se non splendor di quella idea
> Che partorisce, amando, il nostro Sire."
>
> —*Parad.* xiii. 52.

universe therefore is one as He is one.* All things come from God, and all participate, more or less, in the divine nature, according to the end for which they were created. They all navigate towards different ports upon the great ocean of existence,† but all are moved by the same will. Flowers in the garden of God, they all merit our love according to the degree of excellence he has bestowed upon each.‡ Of these *Man* is the most eminent. Upon him God has bestowed more of His own nature than upon any other created thing.§ In the continuous scale of Being, that man whose nature is the most degraded approaches the animal; he whose nature is the most noble approaches the angel.‖ Everything that comes from the hand of God

* "... Le cose tutte quante
Hanno ordine tra lore; e questo è forma,
Che l'universo a Dio fa simigliante."
—*Parad.* i. 103.

† *Convito*, ii. 2.

"Onde si muovono a diversi porti
Per lo gran mar dell' Essere, e ciascuna
Con istinto a lei dato, che la porti."
—*Parad.* i. 112.

‡ "Le frondi, onde s'infronda tutto l' orto
Dell' Ortolano eterno, amo io cotanto
Quanto da lui a lor di bene è porto."
—*Parad.* xxvi. 64.

§ "Onde l'anima umana, che è forma nobilissima di queste che sotto il Cielo sono generate, piu riceve della natura divina, che alcun altra." —*Conv.* ii. 2.

‖ "E perocchè nell' ordine intellettuale dell' universo si sale e discende per gradi quasi continui dall' infima forma all' altissima, e dall' altissima all' infima ... e tra l'angelica natura che è cosa intellettuale e l'anima umana non sia grado alcuno, ma sia quasi l'uno e l'altro continuo ... e trà l'anima umana, e l'anima piu perfetta delli bruti animali ancora mezzo alcuno non sia: e siccome noi

tends towards the perfection of which it is susceptible ;* and man more earnestly and more vigorously than all the rest. There is this difference between Him and other creatures, that His perfectibility is what Dante calls "possible," which he uses for *indefinite.*† Coming from the bosom of God, the human soul incessantly aspires towards Him, and endeavours by holiness and knowledge to become reunited with its source. Now, the life of the individual man is too short and too weak to enable him to satisfy that yearning in this world ; but around him, before him, stands the whole human race, to which he is allied by his social nature,—that lives for ever, accumulating from generation to generation its labours upon the road to eternal truth. Humanity is one.‡ God has made nothing in vain, and since there exists a *collective* Being, a multitude of men, there exists *one* aim for them all—one work to be accomplished by them all.§ Whatever this aim

veggiamo molti nomini tanto vili e di si bassa condizione che quasi non pare esser altro che bestia; cosi è da porre e da credere fermamente che sia alcuno tanto nobile e di si alta condizione che quasi non sia altro che Angelo, altrimente non si continuerebbe la umana spezie da ogni parte che esser non può."—*Cino.* vii. 3.

* "Ciascuna cosa da providenzia di propria natura impinta è inclinabile alla sua perfezione."—*Convito,* i. 2.

† "Nam etsi aliæ sunt essentiæ intellectum participantes, non tamen intellectus earum est possibilis ut hominis."—*Monarchia,* i.

‡ *Convito,* iv. 15.

§ "Deus et natura nil otiosum facit, sed quicquid prodit in esse, est ad aliquam operationem . . . . Est ergo aliqua propria operatio humanæ universitatis, ad quam ipsa universitas hominum in tanta multitudine ordinatur ad quam quidem operationem nec homo unus, nec domus una, nec vicinia, nec una civitas, nec regnum particulare pertingere potest. . . . Patet igitur, quod ultimum de potentia

may be, it certainly exists, and it is our duty to endeavour to discover and attain it. Mankind, then, ought to work together in unity and concord, in order that the intellectual power bestowed upon them may receive the highest possible development in the double sphere of thought or action.* It is only by harmony, consequently by association, that this is possible. Mankind must be *one*, even as God is *one*:—one in organisation, as it is already *one* in its principle. Unity is taught by the manifest design of God† in the external world, and by the necessity of an aim. Unity requires something by which it may be represented; hence the necessity of an unity of government. Therefore it is indispensable that there be some centre to which the collective inspiration of mankind may ascend, thence

ipsius, humanitatis est potentia, sive virtus intellectiva. Et quia potentia ista per unum hominem, seu per aliquam particularium communitatum superius distinctarum, tota simul in actum reduci non potest, necesse est multitudinem esse in humano genere per quam quidem tota potentia hæc actuetur."—*Monarchia*, i.

* "Proprium opus humani generis totaliter accepti est actuare emper totam potentiam intellectus possibilis per prius ad *speculandum*, et secundario propter hoc ad *operandum* per suam extensionem."—*Monarchia*, i.

† "Et cum cœlum totum unica motu, scilicet primi mobilis, et unico motore, qui Deus est, reguleter in omnibus suis partibus, motibus, et motoribus . . . humanum genus tunc optime se habet, quando ab unico principe tanquam ab unico motu, in suis motoribus, et motibus regulatur. Propter quod necessarium apparet ad bene esse mundi monarchiam esse, sive unicum principatum, qui Imperium appellatur."—*Monarchia*, i.

"Omne illud bene se habet et optime quod se habet secundem intentionem primi agentis qui Deus est. . . . De intentione Dei est, u omne creatum divinam similitudinem representet, in quantum, propria natura recipere potest. . . . Sed genus humanum maxime Deo assimilatur, quando maxime est unum, quando totum unitur in uno."—*Monarchia*, i.

to descend again in the form of LAW—a power strong in unity, and in the counsel of the higher intellects naturally destined to rule; providing with calm wisdom for all the different functions—the distinct employments which are to be fulfilled; itself performing the part of pilot, of supreme chief, in order to achieve the highest possible degree of perfection. Dante calls it "the universal Religion of human nature:"* in other words, empire—IMPERIUM. It will be its duty to maintain concord amongst the rulers of states, and this peace will diffuse itself from that high centre into towns, and from the towns among each cluster of habitations, into every household and the individuals of which it is composed.†

But where is the seat of this Empire to be?

At this question Dante quits all analytic argument, and takes up the language of synthetic and absolute affirmation, like a man in whom the least expression of doubt excites astonishment. He is no longer a *philosopher*, he is a *believer*.

He points to ROME, the HOLY CITY, as he calls her—the city whose very stones he declares to be worthy of reverence—"*There* is the seat of empire. There never was, and there never will be a people endowed with such capacity to acquire command, with more vigour to maintain it, and more gentleness in its exercise, than the Italian nation, and especially the Holy Roman people."‡ God chose Rome as

* ". . . . A perfezione dell' *universale religione della umana spezie*, conviene essere uno quasi nocchiero, che considerando le diverse condizioni del mondo e li diversi e necessari affari ordinando abbia del tutto universale e irrepugnabile ufficio di comandare."—*Convito*, ii. 4.

† *Convito*, id.

‡ "E perocche più dolce natura signoreggiando e più forte in sostenendo e più sottile in acquistando, ne fù ne sia che quel popolo santo nel quale l'alto sangue Troiano era mischiato, Iddio quello elesse a quell' officio."—*Convito* ii.; *Monarchia* ii., passim.

the Interpreter of his design among the nations. Twice has she given unity to the world; she will bestow it a third time and for ever. Think you that it was by physical strength that Rome, a mere city, a handful of men, subjected so many nations? Dante will tell you that there was a moment when he himself believed that it had been thus, and his soul was ready to revolt against the usurping city. Afterwards his eyes were opened: in the pages of the history of this people he saw the working of Providence unfold itself, "*predestinationem divinam.*" It was decreed that the world should be prepared, by equality of subjection to a single power, in order that the teachings of Jesus might cause new life to spring up throughout the whole earth. God consecrated Rome to this mission—therein lay the secret of her strength. Rome had no personal ambition; she did not struggle with the universe for her own welfare; she accepted the mission for the benefit of mankind. "Populus ille sanctus, pius, et gloriosus, propria commoda neglexisse videtur, ut publica pro salute humani generis procuraret." And when the work was done, Rome rested from her labours, until the second Gospel of Unity was needed by the world. It is in the writings of Dante (for the quotations would be too long) that we must look for the development of his thesis, from the authority of the poets, whom he always interrogates with reverence, to that of Jesus, who, he says, recognised by his death the legitimacy of the jurisdiction that Rome exercised over all the human race. The second book of his *Monarchia*, and the fourth and fifth chapters of the second treatise of the *Convito*, are, as it were, an entire hymn to this idea, which Dante revered as religious.

The few and brief quotations I have given will suffice to show that from the study of these works of Dante, the

Italians will find not only the consecration of the national idea by the greatest Italian genius, but an unexpected harvest of truths which have been claimed by writers long posterior. In these pages, written five centuries ago, the tradition of Italian philosophy is linked to the school of Pythagoras, Pelesio, Campanella, and Giordano Bruno. The holy doctrine of progress obtains the support of an authority hitherto unsuspected, but anterior to every other known. The collective life of the human race; the law of its incessant development and progressive advance, accomplished through the medium of perpetually-extending association; the prophetic announcement of a social unity arising from the right distribution of the various social functions with a view to one common *aim*,—the theory of duty, all that forms the basis and the merit of a school generally regarded as French,—we find laid down for us in these books by an Italian of the thirteenth century, which have hitherto been neglected, probably in consequence of their uninviting style and form.

A moderating governing power, then, is necessary; and it is necessary that the seat of this power—the Empire—should be Italy, Rome. Having arrived at this conclusion, Dante naturally looked around for some means of realising his conception.

Italy was divided between the Guelphs and Ghibellines. These names, which in Germany only conveyed the idea of a family feud, signified in Italy a thing of far more serious import. In the eyes of the majority, the Guelphs were the supporters of the Priesthood, the Ghibellines the supporters of the Empire. But this was only the surface of things. Ghibellinism, in fact, represented feudality, the Patricians; Guelphism represented the Commune, the *people*, and upheld the Pope, because it was upheld by the Pope. The people

triumphed: the Commune was established on a foundation of liberty and equality; the Patricians were almost everywhere put down. The feudal element was condemned to impotence from that time forward. Military genius, or wealth, might still render individual members of some of the noble families influential; it might even elevate them to diminion in their own cities; but as a compact, collective element, as a *caste*, the nobility were extinguished for ever.

The people, however, the conquerors, knew not how to turn their victory to account. The time was not yet come for the foundation of Italian Unity upon a popular principle; the day had not yet dawned for the gathering together and fusion of the different races that had crossed and mingled in our land.

The absence of any single moderating Principle—omnipotent over local interests—gave rise to a species of anarchy peculiar to Italy. Within the confines of the Peninsula, twenty republics made fierce war upon each other, and within the bosom of each of these, general ideas gave place to private interests; belief to passion; questions of principle to paltry human quarrels. The various factions experienced in consequence a series of modifications, which were further complicated by the intervention of the French, called in by the Popes, whose fatal policy it was to keep one foreign power in check by means of another, without ever appealing to the Italian element. When Urban IV. summoned Charles of Anjou into Italy, the Patricians (Ghibellines) were his enemies; when, after the Bianchi and Neri parties were formed, Boniface VIII. called in Charles of Valois, the Bianchi, who were plebeians, were persecuted; and the Neri (the Patricians) became transformed into Guelphs, because they sympathised with Charles, the envoy of Boniface. The Bianchi then allied

themselves with the Ghibellines, whose ancient feudalism, however, had been irrevocably crushed.

Dante, who in early life had been a Guelph, then became a Ghibelline; that is to say, he was always on the side of the people, the element of Italian futurity.

But the people were at that time unable to constitute the ideal Dante sought to realise; as yet they only represented a corporation, a fraction; the *Nation*, which Dante dreamed of, was as yet unknown. In looking, therefore, for a centre or link of Unity, Dante found himself compelled to choose, not between Germans, French, or Italians, but between the Germans and the French only.

Italian Unity could not be the work of the Popes, for they, who had made common cause with the people so long as the struggle between the Priesthood and the Empire was undecided, had now abandoned them. Between France and Germany, therefore, it was impossible that the choice could long remain dubious. Germany was distant from Italy, torn by intestine divisions, and weakened by dismemberment, aborred by the Italians of old, and therefore not likely to be long formidable to Italy. This was not the case with France, already visibly advancing towards Unity herself, and favourably viewed by the Italians. Dante, who had also other reasons for not loving France, addressed himself to Germany.

But how?

He intended to make Germany always subaltern, to cancel her *initiative*, and subject her to the destinies of Italy. All the northern races had thronged to Rome between the fifth and seven centuries, to accept the Christian faith, and receive, as it were, the word of their mission there. And Dante intended that Germany should

thus a second time receive it, in the person of her emperor. What mattered it to him whether the man through whose instrumentality Rome was to assume her providential mission bore the name of Henry or any other? The point of moment to him was, to make it manifest that such a mission did exist; that it existed in Rome, and belonged then and for ever to the Roman people. The individual who was for the time being to represent Rome was but a shadow; to be venerated for the day, and vanish the day after. Rome once recognised as the seat of the double Papacy—spiritual and temporal—and living symbol of the Christian duality, the foreign emperor's successor would probably be an Italian, and even if he were not, the inspiration of which he would be the echo would be Italian.

There is not, in the whole treatise *De Monarchia*, a single word concerning Germany or the emperor. The Roman nation is the hero of the book. Dante makes careful provision to prevent the possibility that the individual chosen should ever be able to substitute his own for the Italian Idea.

"*Humanum genus, potissimum liberum, optime se habit.*" "Arise," writes Dante to his fellow-citizens, "like free men; and recollect that the emperor is only your first minister." "*Non enim genas propter gentem, sed rex propter gentem.*"* When he speaks to Henry, it is as one power addressing another. "Art thou," he asks him, "he for whom we wait; or must we seek another? Why dost thou stop half-way, as if the Roman Empire were in Liguria?" "*Romanorum potestas*," he exclaims to Henry, "*nec metis Italiæ, nec triconis Europæ margine coarctatur. Nam, etsi vim passa in angustum gubernacula sua contraxit*

* Epistola ai principi e popoli d'Italia.—*Monarchia* i.

undique, tamen de inviolabili jure fluctus Amphitrites attingens, vix ab inutili unda oceani se circumcingi dignatur." Henry, I repeat, is to him nothing more than the agent of the Roman Empire.

There is, I think, some difference between this doctrine and Ghibellinism. Dante, in fact, in many passages of his poem, in the *Paradiso* especially (c. vi. v. 103, and the following lines), clearly separates himself from Ghibellinism. Both factions sought to enlist him in their ranks, but in vain (*Par.* xii. 69; *Inf.* xv. 70). He studied them on every side; he mixed in their ranks; but it was as an independent man, who felt it a duty to study the elements and forces round him in order to adapt and apply them to his lofty aim.

In 1302 exile and other circumstances drew him somewhat nearer to the Ghibellines; but he openly quitted them in the course of the same year, disapproving their line of action. In his poem he treats both Guelphs and Ghibellines as one who is partisan of neither. He is almost cruel towards Bocca degli Abati (*Inf.* xxxii.), who betrayed the Guelphs; and severely just towards Carlino dei Pazzi, who betrayed the Ghibellines (*idem*). In the course of his pilgrimage after his exile, he mingled, with solemn and lofty mien, amongst all those whom he judged capable of furthering his design, without distinction of party. He died in the house of a Guelph.

Dante was neither Guelph nor Ghibelline. Like every man bearing within him the sacred flame of genius, he pursued an independent path, having a higher aim in view than his fellows. He looked beyond Guelphism and Ghibellinism, to the National Unity of Italy; beyond Clement V. and Henry VII. he saw the unity of the world, and the moral government of that unity in the hands of Italy.

This idea he never renounced. In his poem he flagellates all the Italian cities, whether Guelph or Ghibelline, without regard or fear; Italy alone is sacred to him; and if he reproves or reproaches her, you feel that his reproaches are mingled with tears, aspiration, and a gigantic pride of country.

In his small unfinished work, *De Vulgari Eloquio*, he attacks all the Italian dialects, but it is because he intends to found a language common to all Italy; to create a *form* worthy of representing the National idea. He felt the utmost indignation—he whom the *savans* tells us wrote in French—against all Italians who preferred a foreign tongue to their own, and against those who wrote in favour of the election of a foreign Pope. The Italian spirit was sacred to him in whatever shape it was made manifest.

Dante, as I said some pages back, was a Christian and an Italian. M. Ozanam, almost the only one who rejects the absurd qualifications of Guelph or Ghibelline, goes more widely astray than the others on the point of his religion. The persecutions excited by Boniface VIII., and the fact of the Cardinal Legate del Poggetto being sent by John XXII. to Ravenna, to procure the disinterment of the ashes of Dante, that they might be exposed to public execration, are a sufficient answer to those who in the present day seek to prove him an orthodox Catholic. Nor do I think the Popes, many of whom were venerated as saints in their day, and whom Dante has placed in hell, would greatly applaud the zeal of these writers. There are schools of philosophy now existing in France which prophesy that the Papacy will ere long become the apostle of democracy,—*en attendant*, the Pope has excommunicated them. I have not space fully to enter upon the question of Dante's religion. Foscolo's discourse upon the poem

may be consulted with advantage; but the study of the *Convito* and the eleventh canto of the *Paradiso* will, I think, be quite enough to put a stop for ever to this posthumous ebullition of Catholicity. The Christianity of Dante was derived directly from the first fathers of the Church, whose enlarged views had already been departed from by the Roman Papacy of the thirteenth century. His own ideas of the progressive perfecting of the principle of human nature in a future life, and of the participation of all men in the spirit of God, open the way for the still further development of Christian truth itself. To him the Papacy was nothing more than a problem of spiritual organisation. He was willing to submit to it on condition that it did not shackle any of his favourite ideas.

The ideas of which I have here given a sketch are fermenting, more or less boldly developed, among the youth of Italy. Understanding Dante better than the men who write about him,* they revere him as the prophet of the nation, and as the one who gave to Italy not only the sceptre of modern poetry, but the initiative thought of a new philosophy. But in the time of Dante, in the midst of that whirlwind of personal and local passions which intercepted all views of the future, who understood, who *could* understand thoughts like those which he bore within his soul? And what must have been the life he dragged through in the midst of elements so discordant from his ideal, he who, in his native city, could find only two just men—himself, perhaps, and his friend Guido—both misunderstood (*Inf.* vi.-xiii.)—between an idea vast as the

* M. Balbo, who, by the way, does not believe the Unity of Italy possible, dismisses the book, *De Monarchia*, with the sentence, "Un tessuto di sogni" (*a tissue of dreams*). Cesare Cantù, in his *Margherita pi Pusterla*, calls it "abbietissimo libro" (*a most abject book*).

world, and that powerlessness to realise it which became every day more and more apparent!

His was indeed a tragical life—tragical from the real ills that constantly assailed him—from the lonely thought which ate into his soul, because there was none whom he might inspire with it. At the age of twenty-four (1290) he lost Beatrice, after having seen her in the arms of another; at the age of thirty, towards the end of 1295, he lost Charles Martel, to whom he was attached by a warm friendship; and Forese Donati, whom he loved still more tenderly.* Five years afterwards he was PRIORE, and compelled by his duty as a citizen to bring upon himself the hatred of the two parties who harassed Florence, by banishing the chiefs of both; and that of Boniface VIII. and of all the friends of Charles de Valois, whose mediation he caused to be refused. Guido Cavalcanti, for sixteen years his best friend, died that same year; and two years after this began for Dante the Hell of Exile—that lingering, bitter, agonising death,† which none can *know* but the exile himself,—that consumption of the soul, which has only *one* hope to console it. Accused on the strength of a forged document, and whilst he was absent as ambassador to Boniface VIII., of extorting money, he was sentenced to a fine, and to two years' banishment. His house was given up to pillage, and his lands devastated. Three months afterwards, enraged that he had neither paid the fine nor sought to justify himself, his enemies condemned him to be *burnt to death: ubique comburatur sic quod moriatur.* Then began his life of

* *Parad.* viii. 55, and following lines; *Purg.* xxiii. 76, etc.

† "Piget me cunctis sed pietatem maximam illorum habeo quicunque in exilio tabescentes, patriam tantum somoriando revisunt."—*De Vulg. El.* ii. c. 6; Lion. Aret. *Vita di Dante.*

wandering and disappointment; he went from province to province, from city to city, from court to court, to see if among the heads of parties, among warriors of renown, he might find a man who could or would save Italy, but in vain. The desire and ambition might exist in some, but the capacity in none. Everywhere he found narrowness of intellect; sometimes he was treated with contempt. Poverty assailed him: *urget me rei familiaris egestas.** He wore at times the semblance of a mendicant. Like a ship without sail or rudder, he was driven through every port, harbour, and shore, by the bleak and bitter wind of grievous poverty.† He bore up against it all. His adversity was great, but he was great as his adversity. He who had loved so well was alone, without a single beloved hand to soothe with its caress his brow, burning with the fever of Genius; he whose heart was so great, so gloriously proud, in peril of his life, was reduced to beg, at the gates of men whom perhaps he despised at the bottom of his soul, for the "bitter bread."‡ He who bore within himself the soul of Italy was misunderstood by the whole nation; but he did not yield; he wrestled nobly against the external world, and ended by conquering it. If for some rare moment he seemed to be borne down by the fury of the storm, it was only to rise up again great as before—

* Ep. Kani Grandi de Scala.

† "Per le parti quasi tutte, alle quali questa lingua si stende, peregrino, quasi mendicando, sono andato, mostrando contro a mia voglia la piaga della fortuna, che suole ingiustamente al piagato molte volte essere imputata. Veramente io sono stato legno senza vela, a senza governo, portato a diversi porti e foci e liti dal vento secco che vapora la dolorosa povertà; e sono apparito agli occhi a molti che forse per alcuna fama in altra forma m'aveano imaginato; nel cospetto de'quali non solamente invilio, ma di minor pregio se fece ogni opera si già fatta come quella che fosse a fare."—*Convito.*

‡ *Che sa da sale.*

"Come la fronda che flette la cima
Nel transito del vento, e poi si leva
Per la propria virtù che la sublima."

—*Parad.* xxvi. 85.

Taking refuge in his conscience: "sotto l'usbergo del sentirsi puro"—graving by night his noble vengeance in the immortal pages which he could only leave to mankind as he descended to the tomb,* he kept himself faithful to his God, to his purpose, to himself. Nothing could bend or corrupt his soul. It was like the diamond, which can only be conquered by its own dust.

And if the pain had not been within, no adversity springing from without could have disturbed this tetragonal† being, who was born to suffer and to do. He was made to govern, not to submit, endowed with an immense power of will, and a patience beyond all proof—inflexible from conviction, and calmly resolute. Whenever I think on the life of Dante, he reminds me, not of Luther himself, but of his beautiful words—"Weil, weder sicher noch gerathen ist, etwas nider genissen zu thun, hier stehe ich; ich kann nicht anders. Gott helfe mir. Amen." And Dante was of those who recognise no law but that of conscience, and recur for aid to none but God. His soul was naturally loving, but, superior as he felt himself to all his contemporaries, it was the *human species* he loved—MAN, as one day he will be,—but with the men who surrounded him, and whom, with a very few exceptions, he did not esteem,

* *Parad.* xxvii., 55 et seqq; *Purg.* xi. 133, et seqq.

† . . . "Avvegna chio mi senta
Ben tetragono ai colpi di ventura."

—*Parad.* canto xvii.

. . . "On all sides
Well squared to Fortune's blows."

—*Carey.*

he could have no intimate communion. When, in the *Purg.* (xi. 61, et seqq.*), Omberto dei Conti di Santafiore says to him—

> "L'antico sangue e l'opere leggiadre
> De' miei maggior mi fèr si arrogante
> Che non pensando alla comune madre,
> Ogni nomo ebbi in dispetto tanto avante
> Ch'io ne morii—"

Dante bows down his head; one would say that he felt himself guilty of the same fault. He loved glory—he does not conceal it; but it was not so much renown, which he compares to the colour of the grass—which the sun first colours green, and then withers †—as the glory of triumph over the obstacles in the way of the aim—the sanction of those who should call *ancient* the times in which he lived. He desired to live in the future, in the *second life*, and that his thoughts might descend like an inspiration into the hearts of his successors here below. The grand thought of a mutual responsibility, uniting in one bond the whole human race, was ever and ever floating before his eyes. The consciousness of a link between this world and the next, between one period of life and the remainder, is revealed every moment in the poem: a feeling of tenderness, engendered by this belief, gleams across the *Purgatorio*, and penetrates even into the *Inferno*. The spirits there anxiously ask for tidings of earth, and desire to send back news of themselves.‡ He loved Florence: the place of his

* I am decidedly of the opinion put forth by Foscolo, that, with the exception of some fragments, the poem was never published by Dante. For proof of this see the *Discorso sul testo.*

† *Purg.* xi. 115. See also v. 100, et seqq.

‡ *Inf.* and *Purg.* passim. The beautiful sentiment expressed in the lines, "A meie portai l'amor che qui raffina," which are spoken by Currado Malespina, in the eighth chapter of *Purgatorio*, has been almost universally misunderstood.

birth—the temple, which he calls "his beautiful St. John,"* where he one day broke a baptismal font to save a child from drowning, are recollected with profound regret:—he did not love the Florentines, and inscribed at the head of his poem the words, omitted in all editions, Foscolo's excepted—

"FLORENTINUS NATIONE, NON MORIBUS."

A man of the middle ages, and endowed with all the strong passions of that time, he knew what *revenge* meant. When Geri del Bello, his relation, passed him without looking, he says with sorrow—

. . . . . "La violenta morte
Che non gli è vendicata ancor, diss'io,
Per alcun che dell'onta sia consorte
Fece lui disdegnoso; odde sen gio
Senza parlarmi."—*Infer.* xxix. 31 et seqq.

But he had too much greatness in his soul, and too much pride, it may be, to make revenge a personal matter; he had nothing but contempt for his own enemies, and never —except in the case of Boniface VIII., whom it was necessary to punish in the name of religion and of Italy—did he place a single one of them in the *Inferno*, not even his judge, Conte Gabrielli. The "non ragioniam di lor ma guarda e passa," which in the beginning of his poem he applies to those who have been worthy neither of heaven nor hell, appears to have been his own rule towards his enemies. Strong in love and strong in hatred, it is never love of himself nor hatred of others. Life was not sweet or dear enough to him for him to attach much importance to anything personal; but he loved justice and hated wrong. He was able to look Death in the face without that

* "Il mio bel san Giovanni."

egotistical fear, mingled with egotistical hope, which appears in every turn of Petrarch's poems, and in his letters, and also in the writings of Boccaccio. It appeared to him of more importance to hasten to accomplish his mission upon earth, than to meditate upon the inevitable hour which marks for all men the beginning of a new task. And if at times he speaks of weariness of life,* it is only because he sees evil more and more triumphant in the places where his mission was appointed. He concerned himself not about the length or the shortness or life, but about the end for which life was given; for he felt God in life, and knew the creative virtue there is in action. He wrote as he would have acted, and the pen in his hand became, as we have said, like a sword; nor is it without a purpose that he places a sword in the hand of *Homer*, the sovereign poet.† He wrestled, when it was against nothing else, with himself—against the wanderings of his understanding‡—against the over-weening fire of poesy§ that consumed him—against the violence of his passions. The purification of heart by which he passed from the hell of struggle to the heaven of victory, to the calmness of one who has made the sacrifice of hope from his earthly life—*in violenta e desperata pace*—is admirably shown in the poem. With a character such as we have sketched—haughty, disdainful, untamable, as the opinion of his contemporaries, even through imaginary anecdotes, tells us—looking upon himself as belonging to the small number of privileged beings endowed with high understanding, and worthy of the communion of the Holy Spirit—impatient of the rule of others, and disposed to infringe it‖—Dante was evidently one of those men who

* *Purg.* xx. 10-14. † *Inf.* iv. 86, et seqq.
‡ *Inf.* xxvi. 21. § *Purg.* ‖ Ep. ded. ad Kanem.

pass unscathed and erect through the gravest and most perilous conjunctures, nor ever bow the knee save to the power that works within. That power he adored with a trembling and religious fervour—*Deus fortior ;*—he had gone through every stage of the growth of an *Idea*, from the moment when it arises for the first time in the soul's horizon, down to that when it incarnates itself in the man, takes possession of all his faculties, and cries to him, "Thou art mine."

It was *the dust of the diamond*—the hidden, mysterious pain of Genius, so real, and yet, from its very nature, understood by so few—the torment of having seized and conceived the ideal, and felt the impossibility of reducing it to action in this life—the Titanic dream of an Italy, the leader of humanity, and angel of light among the nations—contrasted with the reality of an Italy divided against herself, deprived of her temporal head, and betrayed by her spiritual ruler—coveted by all strangers, and ready to prostitute herself to them—the sense of the power within to guide men towards good, while condemned, from adverse circumstances and the sway of egotistical passions, to waste that power in enforced impotence—the constant inward struggle between faith and doubt ;—all these were the things that changed the author of the *Vita Nuova* into the writer of the *Inferno*—the young angel of peace and gentle poetry, whose features Giotto has preserved to us, into the Dante with whom we are familiar, the Dante come back from hell. It was when bowed down beneath this internal conflict that Dante, one day, wandering across the mountains of Lunigiana, knocked at the gate of the monastery of Santa Croce del Corvo. The monk who opened it read at a single glance all the long history of misery on the pale thin face of the stranger. "*What do*

you seek here?" said he. Dante gazed around, with one of those looks in which the soul speaks, and slowly replied—"Peace"—PACEM.* There is in this scene something that leads our thoughts up to the eternal type of all martyrs of genius and love, praying to His Father, to the Father of all, upon the Mount of Olives, for peace of soul, and strength for the sacrifice.

PEACE—neither monk nor any other creature could bestow it on Dante. It was only the unseen hand, which sends the last arrow, that could, as Jean Paul says, take from his head the Crown of Thorns.†

I have endeavoured in the foregoing pages to show Dante in a point of view hitherto too much neglected, and which is, nevertheless, I think, the most important. I have, at the same time, given an answer to the astonishment of M. Labitte, and of all the Labittes of the day, at the newly-kindled enthusiasm with which this generation studies the old Allighieri. Besides that which all men of heart and intellect at all times look from the genius of the poet—the Ideal made manifest—his soul—the soul of his epoch—Italy seeks there for the secret of her nationality. Europe seeks there the secret of Italy, and a prophecy of modern Thought.

Dante has found peace and glory; the crown of thorns has long since fallen from his head; the idea which he cast like seed into the world has sprung up, and developed from century to century, from day to day; his soul which did

* Letter from Fra Flavio to Uguccione della Faggiola v. Troia del Veltro Allegorico.

† "Aber das Grab ist nicht tief; es ist der leuchtende Fustritt eines Engels, des uns sucht. Wenn die unbekannte Hand den letzten Pfeil an das Haupt des Menschen sendet, so bückt er vorher das Haupt, und der Pfeil hebt bloss die Dornenkrone von seinen Wunden ab."

not find a responsive echo in its course here below, communes in the present day with millions in his native land. More than five hundred years have passed over the country of Dante since the death of his mortal part—years of glory and of shame, of genius and intolerable mediocrity, of turbulent liberty and mortal servitude; but the name of Dante has remained, and the severe image of the poet still rules the destinies of Italian generations, now an encouragement and now a reproach. The splendour of no other genius has been able to eclipse or dim the grandeur of Dante; never has there been a darkness so profound that it could conceal this star of promise from Italian eyes; neither the profanations of tyrants and Jesuits, nor the violations of foreign invaders, have been able to efface it. "Sanctum Poetæ nomen quod nunquam barbaries violavit." The poem was long misunderstood and degraded by vulgar commentators; the prose works, in which Dante had written the *National Idea* still more explicitly, were forgotten—concealed by suspicious tyranny, from the knowledge of his fellow-citizens; and yet, as if there had been a compact, an interchange of secret life between the nation and its poet, even the common people who cannot read know and revere his sacred name. At Porciano, some leagues from the source of the Arno, the peasants show a tower in which they say Dante was imprisoned. At Gubbio a street bears his name; a house is pointed out as having been dwelt in by him. The mountaineers of Talmino, near Udine, tell the travellers that there is the grotto where Dante wrote—there the stone upon which he used to sit; yet a little while, and the country will inscribe on the base of his statue :—

The Italian Nation to the Memory OF ITS PROPHET.

FROM THE POPE TO THE COUNCIL.

PREFACE.

(Written in London, 1850.)

THE writings here reprinted bear upon the Religious Question: they contain the profound convictions of one who has ever believed and said that all the great questions which agitate the world resolve themselves into a religious question. Those who reflect how in all times of moral and intellectual crisis, the men who consult their inmost conscience, and, without regard to the powers and prejudices of the day, say aloud what they believe in their hearts, have always been calumniated, will not now be arrested by the abuse of a few journalists,—the old echo of a dying past,—who accuse the National Italian party of being unbelievers, atheists, and abettors of disorder for the love of disorder. They will read and judge for themselves. They will see, from the pages here reproduced, dating from 1832, that we have not waited for favourable circumstances, for the sympathy which the imprudence of our enemies has excited in our behalf, to express our thoughts, or to attack that which we thought it our duty to attack. They will see also that we have not kept back one iota of our religious faith from those who are enlisted under the same political banner—that we have never sacrificed our conscience to the immediate aim of our efforts, or to the desire of increasing our ranks. They will comprehend that if our

opinions be erroneous, they are at least earnest; and they will feel the necessity, the duty, of judging them seriously. In the silence to which Italy is condemned—a silence which she can only break by revolutions—these opinions have a collective importance; they are not only the barren thought of an individual; they are the echo of the thought which is now subterraneously fermenting in the Italian masses, and they have received their first consecration in Rome and in Venice.

When Young Italy raised her banner, now nearly twenty years ago, two elements predominated in Italy: superstition and materialism. Superstition was the habit of a part of the population, to whom all light, all education, was forbidden, led astray by a traditional religious sentiment conceived in the narrowest spirit,—of men who, deprived of every motive of action, of all consciousness of the true life of citizens, clung with a kind of despair to a heaven little understood. Materialism was the natural reaction of those who had been able to emancipate themselves from the abject spectacle which religion offered, from the brutal yoke it sought to impose upon their intelligence. It was said to them, *Believe all that we affirm:* they replied by *denying* all. Luther compared the human mind to a drunken peasant upon horseback, who, leaning over on one side, falls on the other, when you seek to set him upright. Many peoples have passed through a similar experience. Young Italy rejected at once both materialism and superstition. It declared that in order to acquire the strength necessary to become a nation, Italy must emancipate herself not only from the old Catholic belief, but from the materialism of the eighteenth century. The first pretended a divine sanction to immobility; the second dried up the sources of faith, and logically tended to destroy the idea of

duty, and to leave nothing for the object of human worship, but right and enjoyment. We wished to progress as the world progresses, according to the will of God, through the Life eternal. We did not wish to combat in order to obtain the satisfaction of certain appetites, *panem et circenses*, but for something more elevated; for the dignity, the sacred liberty of the human soul, its development in love. We sought to fulfil a mission upon earth for our own and for our brethren's good.

It is not my purpose to give here an exposition of the complete doctrines of Young Italy; but I hold it important to prove, that our language to-day is the same as that of twenty years ago. We have never deviated from it. Now as then, my predominating idea, and the vital thought of all my labours, is this: a fatal separation has been established between religious and political belief, between heaven and earth; this is why we wander groping from one crisis to another, from convulsive movement to convulsive movement, without succeeding, without finding peace. It is necessary to reunite earth to heaven, politics to the eternal principles which should direct them; nothing great or durable can be done without this. GOD, Religion; THE PEOPLE, Liberty in Love; these two words, which as individuals we inscribed on our banner in 1831, and which afterwards—significant phenomenon—became the formula of all the decrees of Venice and of Rome, sum up all for which we have combated, all for which we will combat unto victory. The people of Italy instinctively comprehended this idea. Young Italy became rapidly powerful. A gradual transformation was effected in a portion of its enlightened youth; which became, I will not say the most devoted, but the most constant in devotion, to their country. Two or three years of struggle and suffering suffice to

exhaust the strength when the inspiring sentiment is only one of reaction, of indignation against oppression: a whole life is not too much for the realisation of an idea which seeks to reunite earth to heaven.

The party which in Italy has assumed the title of *Moderate*, came across our path. Imbued with a badly, disguised materialism, springing up in the shadow of courts which have no other faith than that of power at any price, this party has no *belief*, it has only *opinions*. Adopting and abandoning them with the same ease, it accommodates itself to everything in turn; princes, republics, concessions, popular insurrections, truth and falsehood. It creates nothing; it cannot create anything; it seeks *force*, material force, and worships it wherever it is found, and whatever name it may bear. It has called itself *opportunist*. At the present time it is warring against the priests in Piedmont, in the service of royalty; it would do the same thing to-morrow against the princes, in the name of the Pope, should the Pope recommence a career of concessions. In reality, the *Moderates* believe neither in the princes, nor in the Pope, nor in the people; they believe in their own coterie, in their small conceptions, in their personal influence. They have neither a grand idea nor a great sentiment. They consequently follow, and do not initiate. When Charles Albert, whom they despised, manifested a weak ambition which appeared to them capable of serving their designs, they proclaimed him the first man of Italy. When Pius IX., in whom as Pope they do not believe, put on a semblance of liberalism, they wrote volumes to prove that Papacy was to regenerate the whole world. And now, even since the affairs of Rome, they do not dream of saying to the Pope: *You are a falsehood—descend;* they venture only to combat his temporal authority, and, at the same

time, hypocritically prostrate themselves before the spiritual authority of *the father of believers*. What can Italy or the world hope from such men, and from such a policy?

This policy has come to us from Machiavelli. But with Machiavelli it was not theory, but history. He lived in a period of ruin and dissolution; liberty had perished everywhere; the last spark was being extinguished in Florence; the Pope and the Emperor having at last coalesced, after a struggle which had endured for ages, had vowed to spread darkness over all Italy. Corruption had descended from the Courts to the middle ranks of society. Cramped by the iron hand of the foreigner, the national genius was gradually disappearing, and the efforts of the giant Michael Angelo and of his great contemporaries, appeared only likely to result in immobilising it in stone or on canvas, raising to it a magnificent monument, which might serve it for a tomb. Military valour was no longer the buckler of a free state. The chiefs of bands, without country, without faith, sold their courage, talents, and soldiers to the highest bidder. Poor Machiavelli, after having endeavoured to struggle, after having, in his own person, protested in prison and under torture, seated himself in sorrow upon this great ruin, and described, after the manner of an epitaph, the causes which had occasioned it. Using the scalpel of the anatomist upon the corpse, he made of his books a long report of his work of dissection. And now, these men would inscribe the device of death upon the cradle of a new life. After more than three centuries of that latent renovating transformation, which men call death or sleep, Italy is breaking the stone of her tomb, stirring in all her limbs, making of her winding-sheet a banner of insurrection; and instead of bending the knee before this awakening nation, instead of crying to it, *In the*

name of God and the people, gird thyself for a supreme effort, and arise, they come coldly and pedantically to read to it a chapter of Machiavelli. Oh! had it at least been that one in which he says to his country, "*Thou wilt never again have life, except by unity; and thou wilt never have unity, except by abolishing the Papacy.*"

But they dare not. They would steal, unperceived, some fragments of liberty, without teaching the people to comprehend them, or the reason of their right to them; they wage a petty war, which will have a speedy end, against the priests, without daring to go to the source of the corruption of the priests; without daring to say aloud: *Liberty is the right and the duty of the human soul;* he who pretends *to enslave the conscience,* MUST *desire to enchain the body.* Strange, that this is the party which in England, in this ancient land of liberty and of good sense, finds favour; whilst the popular party, the logical party, the openly and honestly emancipatory party, is coldly received. A few vain good wishes, and a number of injurious suspicions, behold all the part that England has as yet taken in a question which is pregnant with the liberty of the world—the Italian question. The cause—I declare it frankly, and at once—is that the religious sentiment is expiring in England, and that, whilst the form remains intact, the foundation is being undermined and corrupted. The unity of the religious principle of the Reformation has disappeared. The divorce, of which I spoke above, between earth and heaven has been accomplished in England as elsewhere; and it is because this separation has taken place, that Catholicism temporarily gains ground upon Protestantism.

Let me explain my thought.

A mighty question is now being agitated in Europe

between two principles which have divided the world since its creation; and these two principles are liberty and authority.* The human mind desires to progress according to its own light, not by favour of concession, but by virtue of the law of its own life. Authority says to it:—*Rest where thou art: I alone strike the hour of the march; when I am silent everything should rest, for all progress which is accomplished without me and beyond me, is impious.* The human mind interrogates itself: it feels its own right and power; it finds that the germ of progress is in itself, that strength and right come to it from God, and not from an intermediate power coming between itself and God, as if charged to lead it. Hence springs revolt and resistance, and hence the anomalous situation of Europe. The conscience of the human race is struggling with tradition, which desires to enchain it; the future and the past dispute for the collective life of humanity, and for that of the individual. The man who in these struggles, ever stifled yet ever reappearing,—in this series of manifestations and violent repressions which have constituted European history for two-thirds of a century,—sees only the action of some turbulent factions, or the result of some accidental or material causes, such as a deficit, a famine, a secret conspiracy or cabinet intrigue, understands nothing of the facts of history, nothing of the *laws*, of which, through those facts, history becomes the expression. And he who in the great questions of the suffrage, or proletarian emancipation, and of nationality, sees nothing but the subjects of political discussion, having no connection with the religious idea,

* It will be seen that the word authority is here used in a narrower sense than is usual with Mazzini. He simply means the *existing* religious authority, which he has always declared to be but the phantom of authority.

with the providential development of humanity, understands neither man nor God, and degrades to the proportions of a pigmy intellectual contest, that which is, in fact, a battle of giants, of which the stake is a step in advance in the universal education of mankind, or a step backward towards the world which we had believed to have ended with the middle ages.

Between the two great armies which sustain the combat, marauders and free corps have undoubtedly introduced themselves and falsified its character; between the two doctrines represented in the two camps, a multitude of exaggerations, of dangerous utopias, of false and immoral philosophies, have come to throw trouble and alarm in men's minds.

It matters little. The real question remains as I have stated it. All these irregular Cossack-like movements will disappear, like the sharp-shooters of an army, when the hour arrives for the masses to begin to move. It matters little also for what I now desire to say, whether the result of the struggle ought to be, as some imagine, the absolute abolition of the principle of authority and the pure and simple enthronement of liberty; or whether, as I believe, the future holds in reserve a great *collective* religious manifestation, in which the two terms, authority and liberty, tradition and individual conscience, will both be recognised as essential elements to the normal development of life, and united in one whole, become at once the safeguard of belief and of progress. What is certain is that transformation implies death, and that the new authority can never be founded until after the complete overthrow of that which now exists.

The destruction of authority, such as it now exists; the proclamation of human liberty, whether as a means or as

the end,—this is the problem which Europe has now to solve. Right or wrong, the human mind believes that it sees a glimpse of new destinies, of a new heaven; and in order to prepare itself to realise them, it claims its independence; it desires to interrogate humanity upon what it believes, upon what it expects and hopes; it desires to pass under revision the laws of life, of its being;—old authority would forbid the attempt.

The question is a vital one; and one would have thought it impossible that there should exist a single people, or a single man, who did not feel the necessity of deciding between the two camps, and of giving to one or the other his name and his active adhesion. And nevertheless it is not so. The solidarity of all in support of the principle in which they believe is only understood on one side. And this side, with shame be it said, is that of old authority.

All the powers whose rallying cry is *Authority*, are allied for the defensive and for the offensive; they fulfil amongst each other the duties of fraternity, when one is attacked the others fly to its aid, in time of peace an universal propaganda rallies the means of all. They have a plan, a combined action, and a visible symbol, the Pope. They do not believe in him; but they feel the want of a common standard, and they support him. Schismatics, orthodox believers, materialists, all those who deny the liberty of the human conscience and its manifestation by acts, join hands around his throne.

It is not thus with the nations or individuals whose rallying cry is *Liberty*. They may recognise their brothers in the ideal sphere; they fail to do so upon the field of reality. Each sustains, defends what he has been able to conquer of liberty for himself; no one exerts himself for the triumph of the principle elsewhere. The life of God is only

sacred to them so far as it is diffused in their own sphere; beyond their own frontiers it becomes indifferent to them: they abandon it to chance, they deliver it over to the enemy. No protection is afforded to the peoples who are tortured and destroyed, no hindrance is offered to the hostile forces which stifle life in its cradle, or prevent the truth from manifesting itself. To the cry of *Authority every where and for all*, they oppose that of *Liberty for those who possess it.* To the insolent, audacious intervention exercised by the other camp, they reply:—*Neutrality, non-intervention*,—not for all, for they do nothing to prevent the intervention of others,—but for themselves. Austria and France intervene in Italy; Prussia in the states of Germany, Russia in Hungary. England, the United States, Switzerland, fold their arms, and tacitly aid the triumph, which they believe to be iniquitous, of old authority over liberty. Like Pilate, they wash their hands of the blood of the just—they would reply to God with the answer of Cain, *Am I my brother's keeper?*

A people, the Italian people, rises up. It goes straight to the heart of the question, to the palladium of the enemy's camp. It proposes to cut the knot, to emancipate the world, to end the struggle for all by a single blow. Authority has its seat, its source, its radiating centre at Rome. Authority pretends that it lives in the love of all, that it is sanctified by universal consent, that a factious minority is all that opposes it. Italy proves indisputably the reverse. It interrogates publicly, peacefully, the wishes of men in the very place where authority has always reigned without opposition, where it has been able to seduce, mislead, and corrupt at its pleasure. An unanimous voice replies:—*The authority which governs us is a falsehood; it is not worthy to guide us, the Pope is no longer our head; we*

appeal to God, to liberty, and to our conscience. The royalty of the Pope, all that could be abolished by *decree*, is abolished. The Pope flees.

A banner bearing these principle-involving and eternal words, *God and the people*, floats above the Vatican. Not a man raises his hand to protest in favour of the Pope; not a man bends the knee before the bulls of excommunication hurled from Gaeta. And to this demonstration, for the benefit of the world's cause, on the part of a people which has always served this cause, how has Protestantism replied? How has England replied? What has been done to save this people, when, in defiance of all right, and without the smallest provocation, four governments leagued together to crush it, and sent their armies to tear down by brute force the sacred banner of liberty of conscience?

There exists great agitation at the present moment in Protestant England on account of the attempted encroachments of Catholicism. Think you that these attempts would have taken place if the people's banner were still floating at Rome? Think you that the Pope would have sent his Catholic hierarchy from Gaeta?

Papacy excluded from Rome, is, it is well known, Papacy excluded from Italy. Papacy excluded from Italy is Papacy excluded from Europe. Place the Pope at Lyons or Seville—he will no longer be Pope, he will only be a dethroned king.

Protestantism has not understood this: there is so little remaining of the deep conviction, so little of the enthusiasm which produced the Reformation, that with regard to the great question in dispute at Rome, it assumed an attitude of scepticism, it contented itself by asking whether such or such a man governing in that city belonged to one political school or another, whether he was a partizan of a system

of terror or of justice; it entered into a polemic with respect to individuals; the *work*, the providential work, which was being accomplished there by instruments destined, whatever might be their character, to disappear the day after, completely escaped its notice. And when Austrians, Neapolitans, and Frenchmen marched against Rome it could not summon up sufficient energy to say: *Hold; a question of religious faith is there at issue, and we will not allow it to be decided by brute force.* And yet we gave it sufficient time to pronounce this prohibition.

Protestantism has thus given to the world, I repeat it, a striking demonstration of want of power, of decay. It will expiate it bitterly, if it does not hasten to repair the mistake it has committed.

Faith begets faith. You cannot expect that men should believe in yours, when they see that it does not furnish you with the consciousness of a right, or the feeling of a duty to fulfil. You have looked on with indifference whilst the liberty of the human soul was being crushed beyond your gates: you will be thought little worthy of defending it within.

Faith is also wanting to the Pope; but he has something which replaces it in the eyes of the world: he has the audacity, the obstinacy, and the unscrupulous logic of his false principles. He attacks; you fortify yourselves for defence: he advances ever, with the continuous motion of the serpent; you move by fits and starts under the impulse of fear: he says, *Servitude for all;* you say, *Liberty for us alone.* You will not have it; or rather, you already have it not. You are slaves, in the slavery of your brethren. Hence it is that your contracted inspiration no longer fecundates the souls of men. There is no religion without faith in the solidarity of the human race.

I have here said what is to me the touch-stone of every

faith. When any one says to me: *Behold a good man*, I ask, *How many souls has he saved?* when any one says to me: *Behold a religious people*, I inquire what it has *done* and *suffered* to bring humanity to its belief.

It is to *man*, and not to a certain number of *men*, that God has given life, the sun, the fruits of the earth, his law, and the capability of comprehending and of obeying it. It was for *all* men that Jesus died upon the Cross. And you who honour the name of God and murmur unceasingly the name of Christ, what have you given, what do you give for all men? For whom do you die, for whom do you dare martyrdom? By what acts do you render testimony to the unity of the human race, of which you are only a member. What work of education do you accomplish upon earth? You found establishments for the sale of Bibles, you smuggled the divine word across forbidden frontiers; but know you not that the foundation, the commencement of all education is liberty? Have you so completely lost the spirit, are you so blind to all but the dead letter of the law, as not to know that it is to man that God allotted the gift of understanding and of interpreting his will, and that the slave is not a man, but the form, the material part of man alone?

And here recurs to me the idea which I expressed above upon the unholy divorce which has taken place between earth and heaven. This divorce is one of the characteristics of the existing Protestant agitation, and it stamps upon it another marked inferiority as compared with the Catholic propaganda.

Man is one: created in the image of God, he thinks and acts. Thought, Action, and that which causes him to translate his Thought in action, Love: behold his Trinity, the reflection of that mysterious Trinity which lives in God.

He who has not the conception or feeling of this Unity—he who would destroy it by dividing faith from works, *thought* from *action*, the moral from the practical or the political man, is not truly religious. He would break the chain which attaches earth to heaven.

Earth and heaven are for me the lowest and the highest steps of the ladder of human progress. Man is placed upon earth not to vegetate, not to expiate, not to contemplate; but to progress; to walk in the path of life according to the *Law* of which God has placed the germ in his heart; to accomplish his own education, and that of others, according to the providential design; to manifest, to practise his belief. The amount and the endurance of this manifestation are the measure of his responsibility fulfilled, of which liberty is the *sine qua non*. Thought completes itself in action; faith in works. God thinks only in working. With us weak beings this identification of thought and action can only be obtained step by step, through labour, suffering, and self-sacrifice. But this is the aim of our earthly life and it is *faith* which gives us strength to attain it. I can conceive religion in no other manner. It teaches us to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. It is supreme. It gives the law, the principles which political action ought to realise.

This unity of man has been felt by the Pope; and, therefore, he evinces that antagonism, of which the following pages upon the Encyclica will be found to speak; the very foundation of his doctrine implies it. Pope and King are indissolubly connected: the one completes and defends the other.

The Pope says: "*Be subservient to my word in all that concerns the things of heaven.*" The King says: "*Be subservient to my word in all that concerns the things of*

earth." They make use by turns of excommunication and bombardment, of the priest and of the executioner.

The Protestantism of to-day denies human unity, the link between earth and heaven. It pretends to emancipate thought, while leaving action submissive and enslaved. It would join conscience and servitude, slavery and liberty. No possible success can await on its propaganda.

I have read the writings of the men who protest against the encroachments of Catholic Rome; I have hearkened to the speeches uttered by them in their meetings. I have not met with a single expression of sympathy for the Rome of the People and for Liberty; not a single prayer for the emancipation of Italy from the chains which forbid her all movement, all spiritual education. We have nothing to do, they say, with political questions. Is it then by leaving man in the hands of his oppressors that you would elevate and emancipate his soul? Is it by leaving erect the Idol of blind Force, in the service of Imposture, that you think to raise in the human soul an altar to the God of a free conscience? Moses broke the idols to pieces; he knew well that so long as the idols existed there would always be idolaters.

Every so-called religious agitation against Papacy will be vain which does not take in hand the Italian political question. While the Pope possesses Italy, he will have a footing in every part of Europe. It is the Italian nation alone that can annihilate Papacy. Would you introduce the light and air of heaven within our prison? Help us to break open its gates, to throw down its walls; and the air and the light of God will pour in to invigorate and enlighten us. Help us to reconquer liberty of speech; you will find that our first word will be *Liberty of conscience.* Petition your government, not to arrest the progress of

Catholicism amongst yourselves—how can it attempt to do so?—but, remembering for once at least that England also has rights and duties in Europe, to put a stop to the prolonged scandal of a foreign occupation of Rome: and be sure that twenty-four hours after our deliverance the Pope shall flee towards Gaeta, and soon much farther than Gaeta.

All agitation which does not make this its object will be vain; not only because Italy bound, gagged, and with the sword of the oppressor at her throat, cannot make any response or derive any advantage from the fraction of truth which may be therein contained, before she has broken that sword; but also because it is immoral; because it fails to recognise the unity of man; because it betrays the sacred duty of rendering assistance to every victim of assassination; and because it is in reality, I believe, a secret compromise between lukewarm religious belief and political prejudices which it is feared to alarm.

We have sometimes been asked, if, when once emancipated, we should proclaim ourselves Protestants. It is not for individuals to reply. The country, free to interrogate itself, will follow the inspirations that God will send it. Religion is not a matter of contract; and those who address such a question to us, can have but little faith in that which they profess to believe to be the truth. For myself, I would not bargain even for the liberty of my country by profaning my soul with falsehood. But this, with my hand upon my heart, I can answer to them:—

Catholicism is dead. Religion is eternal. It will be the soul, the thought of the new World. Every man has in his own heart an altar, upon which, if he invoke it in earnestness, purity, and love, the spirit of God will descend. Conscience is sacred; it is free. But truth is one, and faith

may anticipate the time, when, from the free conscience of enlightened men, beneath the breath of God, shall be given forth a religious Harmony, more mighty, more potent in love and life, than any to which Humanity has yet lent ear.

But in order that the death of Catholicism may be revealed to men, the air must circulate freely, and reach, in order to destroy, the corpse which stands as yet erect. In order that man may invoke in earnestness, purity, and love, the spirit, the truth of God, he must be emancipated from a state which teaches him immorality, egotism, hatred, and mistrust. And in order that truth may triumph over error, it must be free to proclaim itself in the full light of day. This consummation we can offer in exchange for the support which we demand.

FROM THE POPE TO THE COUNCIL.

(*From the Italian del Popolo of September* 1849.)

THE pages here subjoined were written by me, at the request of an editor, and almost at the stroke of a pen, as far back as 1832. Prefixed to a few copies of a translation of Didier's work upon the Three Principles—they had little or no publicity. This, however, is not my reason for reprinting them. The reason is to be found in their date. Profoundly convinced that the religious question imperiously demands a solution; convinced that Papacy having abused its mission, which was already exhausted, for some four centuries, is now a corrupt institution and a mere mockery of religion; convinced, that having lost its own faith and that of others, lost all inspiration, all understanding or love of humanity, all power of infusing life in the coming generations, demanding the food

of the soul,—Papacy reduced to a state of negation can produce nothing henceforth but materialism, a condition of society which it can dominate to tyranny, and the degrading worship of the mere interests of religious *trade;* convinced that the day has arrived for every honest man to break the guilty silence, and to declare to it, as his conscience dictates, *Thou art a lie condemned by God and men: begone: we worship not phantoms;*—I am glad to be able to say to myself and to my readers, that my convictions date from seventeen years ago. Late events have confirmed, they did not inspire them. I know not what it is to be animated by revenge or reaction. Those men who, themselves deprived of all faith, cannot believe in that of others, the men who accused Lamennais of having abandoned the Papacy because a cardinal's hat had not been offered him, will say to me; Your war against Papacy is an answer to the defeat of Rome. I therefore point out, not to them, but to those who might be deceived by them, my opinions in 1832. Those opinions, conceived in the death-like repose of an exile imposed by a Prince and not by the Pope, might err through audacity but not through anger. Even when I saw the bombs furrow the sky of Rome, and foreign soldiers, as in the middle ages, assault her walls, hewing down her valiant sons in the name of an institution in which they did not believe, I did not feel anger, but the deepest pity and grief; pity for Pius, who, not naturally bad, but misled by wicked men and by the pride of princely dominion, will die with remorse in his soul; grief that the Papacy should not be able or willing to sink solemnly, like the sun in the immensity of the ocean, conscious of the religious transformation which Providence is maturing for humanity, and itself transmitting the connecting link and the initiating word to believers. But it seems to be

decreed that great institutions at the expiration of the period of life allotted to them should be extinguished in mire or in blood.

It is over seventeen years since I wrote:—

. . . . . .

"Italy, setting aside the great and important spectacle of a people aspiring to regain its unity, independence, and liberty, presents at the present time a phenomenon that merits the attention of the peoples, and of all those who watch with attention the progress of humanity. In the midst of all the attempts at insurrection which spring up and expire to be reproduced the day after, in the midst of that universal ferment which extends from the Alps to the Pharo, like a boiling spring, whose source is in the Roman soil,—a great fact, an European fact, is being accomplished. There is something more in this land than an oppressed and excited population; something more than a multitude desirous of the amelioration of its material condition; something more than a few communes insisting upon their franchise. There is the development of a moral revolution, the manifestation of a moral law, the proclamation of a principle of moral liberty. There is the human race at the gates of Rome, imperiously demanding its franchise."

"PAPACY IS EXPIRING.—PAPACY IS EXTINCT."

"The moral power of the Papacy has long been dead in Europe. Luther destroyed it by withdrawing from it the north. It sufficed for a single city to deny that power, and to be able to hold out in its denial, to inflict upon it a mortal wound, and to show that Papacy had fulfilled its mission

upon earth, and no longer corresponded to the wants and intellectual condition of humanity.

"From the time when the authority of the hand that once ruled *urbi et orbi* was disputed by one-third of Europe, the death-struggle of Papacy commenced. Papacy is a religion, and the necessary characteristic of religious unity is universality. From that time forward the power of catholicism waned. Every Pope, upon ascending the throne, found the extent of his dominion diminished. It was like a territory the shores of which are insensibly consumed by the ocean; a flower which every breath of wind despoils. As if impelled by some powerful hand—by the hand of progressive civilisation—princes, peoples, philosophers, sectarians, voluntarily or involuntarily conspired to overthrow the colossus whose head was in the clouds and whose feet were of clay. To throw off the yoke of Rome was, towards the middle of the eighteenth century, the predominant idea of Italian and foreign governments. They considered themselves great and strong every time that they had resisted, and triumphed over the pretensions of Rome.

"Naples refused her tribute, violated her commands, and commissioned writers to dispute the papal rights; and if afterwards the Neapolitan government allowed the men on whom it had imposed this office to be persecuted by priests and inquisitors, it was but the habit of tyranny, which avails itself of the instrument, and then destroys it; but the fruits remained. Joseph II. in Germany and Leopold in Italy assailed Papacy with the energy of reform. The priest Ricci and the synod of Pistoia encouraged the emancipation. The Jansenists spread themselves everywhere, and endeavoured to recall the ancient religious severity of primitive Christianity. Voltaire published a crusade against

Catholic Rome, and supported it, if not with profundity of thought and historical philosophy, yet with an activity and variety of weapons truly prodigious. Then the torrent broke forth; the revolutionary lava which swept the entire past from its throne. Then Napoleon, imprisoning the Pope, dragging him to Paris, threatening him, and obliging him to compromise *politically* with him, completed the disgrace and abasement of Papacy. Afterwards, the giant having fallen, and the political inertia allowing a return to the peaceful studies of philosophy, the spiritual and eclectic schools arose—schools which, without denying the religious sentiment, ceased to recognise Papacy as an essential element thereto.

"In the entire Catholic world, De Maistre alone remained to the Pope—De Maistre, who made him the victim of a system logically deduced, joining with him the absolute king and the executioner; catholicism, despotism, and capital punishment being, according to De Maistre, the three bases of Society; the three elements, in fact, of the old world, which the new one was destroying. To-day catholicism is extinct. It is necessary to repeat it, to repeat it to all, in order that they may direct their efforts to found a new unity.

"Humanity has made a step in advance, and is seeking a new symbol. Attempts at new religions, ridiculous in themselves, yet show that a void has been created. The few who have arisen to uphold the Catholic banner, endeavouring to associate it with a liberty of their own, betray their utter powerlessness to support it alone: every religion has had apostles, when it was dying; but their lamentations are over a corpse. They deceived, and still deceive themselves as to the number of their followers, because some, seeing victory secure, turn back to examine this symbol;

and they do not perceive that it is a poetical feeling towards a grand ruin, not a return of faith, which, once extinguished, is never renewed. The *Avenir* has ceased to appear: Lamennais, a man who perhaps would have been a Calvin had he found Catholicism rooted and secure, is in Rome to behold the idol overthrown, and to free himself from an illusion; the *European Review* languishes; Châteaubriand is mute, and will remain so. Papacy is extinct—a worn-out form, preserved yet a little while for the veneration of the lovers of antiquity. The Pope, not being able to convince, puts to death. He protects his inviolability by armed ruffians. He defends the vicarship of Christ with Swiss and Austrian bayonets. No other roof now remains to him but the cupola of St. Peter; and one day or other the banner of liberty waving from the temple shall drive him even from that asylum. Rash futile excommunications alone remain to him—old arms, worn-out for three ages; and he casts them about at random, like weapons abandoned by a flying man.

"The destruction of the Papacy was inevitable in the destinies of humanity, and reveals the action of a social element hitherto neglected, and which threatens to avenge itself, the popular element. Papacy was formerly a power, because it supported itself upon the people. It alone constituted a visible centre of association. It recognised, to a certain degree, the principle of capacity, excluding in the earlier times the aristocracy, opening the way to the man of the people, to the serf, to arrive at ecclesiastical dignity. It waged war against feudalism; war against princely power: it opposed to the spectre, the altar. Therefore the people in Italy were principally Guelph, while in the rest of Europe they adhered to the throne, where the kings warred against the predominance of the seignorial element. After

the death of Julius II., the last great Pope, when the pontiffs perceived that the people began to feel itself powerful, and to look for the revealer of its destinies elsewhere than in the Vatican, they leagued themselves with the kings. This unequal alliance, contracted between the Guelph and Ghibelline principles, sworn enemies for ages, is the most convincing proof of the fall of Papacy. But, even before this, the destroying worm had already invaded the idol; the Papacy introduced the germ of its own destruction, when it assumed and enlarged its temporal dominion. It is necessary for religions to hold themselves supreme in an intellectual and moral sphere. Contact with facts and material phenomena destroys them; taking away their prestige, and bringing before the multitude the metaphysical principle which shapes them, applied to the thousand cases which admit or call for examination. At the present time, the people is neither Guelph nor Ghibelline, but stands aloof, distrustful of both parties, abhorring the one, and abhorring and despising the other; invoking the Moses who shall disclose to them the promised land.

"And yet, Papacy still stands erect; although worn out and undermined on all sides, it stands erect, a pretext for the machinations of absolutist governments; a visible centre alike for cunning and incapability; a loathsome symbol; but still keeping the field, and disputing the ground from those who would lay there the foundations of another temple. While the idol stands, its shadow will continue to cast darkness around; priests, jesuits, and fanatics will shelter themselves beneath its shade to disturb the world; while it stands, discord will exist between moral and material society, between right and fact, between the present and the imminent future. And the Papacy will

stand until new-born Italy shall overthrow the throne on which it is upheld. In Italy, then, is the solution of the European question. To Italy belongs the high office of proclaiming the general emancipation, solemn and accomplished. And Italy will fulfil the duty entrusted to her by civilisation. Then will the peoples hasten to gather round another principle. Then will the south of Europe be placed in equilibrium with the north.

"Awakened Italy shall enter into the European family. How solemn her resurrection! Twice has she awakened, since the fall of pagan Rome closed up the way of ancient civilisation, and she became the cradle of the new. The first time a Word went forth from Italy, which substituted an European spiritual unity for the triumph of material force. The second time she diffused over the world the example of civilisation in arts and literature. The third time her mighty hand will destroy the symbol of the middle ages and will substitute *social* unity for the old *spiritual* unity. *From Rome alone can the Word of modern unity go forth, because from Rome alone can come the absolute destruction of the ancient unity.* But—because catholic unity is extinct, because Papacy has done its work, making of itself a mere prince and the servant of princes in an epoch fatal to princes—we must not conclude that religion is extinct, and that henceforward political theories only are to rule humanity. Political theories have now more than ever need of a religious sanction. Without this they must be always uncertain, deprived of all secure foundation, or firm support. The general will is a fitting foundation for governments; but where the general principles which regulate the moral world are not evidenced in their acts, where they are not reduced to maxims, to recognised laws, there will never be a general will. The discovery of these

principles and the deduction of their inviolability, by proving them of origin superior to the power of the individual, is precisely the task of present civilisation. And to this end should the efforts of all minds desirous of establishing the social edifice upon a solid foundation be directed.

"Religion is eternal. Religion—superior to philosophy—is the bond that unites men in the communion of a recognised generating Principle, and in the consciousness of a common tendency and mission; it is the *Word* which shall raise the standard of Humanity in the midst of the nations of the earth.

"Religion is *Humanity*.

"Men have need of unity. Without unity progress is impossible. There may be movement, but it will not be uniform or concentrated. There will be first disorder; then opposition; finally anarchy.

"Men cannot remain in a state of anarchy. When they are left to it, when the directing minds do not hasten to extinguish it by the revelation of moral Principles, scepticism, materialism, and indifference to every thing superior to the individual are introduced into the struggle. Amongst us, the Catholic faith being shaken by the progress of intelligence, and the shafts of ridicule, men turned anxiously to any reforms, any doctrines that promised to substitute a new order of things for the one destroyed. Unfortunately, tyranny, remaining the master, forbade reforms; forbade that new ways should be opened to the people, to gather round something positive and secure. It followed, then, that men's minds being unsettled, failing to perceive the new Word, and having lost the old, either took refuge again in superstition, or adopted materialism; and at the present time there is, consequently, a want of harmony between the masses and

the educated classes of the nation; there is mistrust on one side, indifference upon the other. There is indifference, because materialism is not a belief. It has no faith, no consciousness of something higher; it recognises no mission—lives in itself, by itself, with itself—looks at facts, and neglects principles—and remains a cold and calculating doctrine of individualism. With such a doctrine great peoples are not created, because great peoples are those who represent and develop an *idea* in humanity; and materialism does not produce, but rather excludes every *general idea*, making *self-interest* a law for every thing; self-interest, a doctrine ever variable, differing in every individual, according to years, circumstances, the accidents of climate, and other physical causes. The consequences of this state of things in Italy are evident to all.

"There is no movement in literature, in the sciences, in the arts, in philosophy, in law. There is no political movement, save of a reactionary nature.

"In literature, men well known for the servility of their political doctrines preach liberty of the mind, independence from rules, the emancipation of poetic genius; claiming for themselves the right of conducting the intellect through the ruins of the middle ages, or the ravings of mysticism; whilst men loving liberty and the progressive development of civil government, refuse the same progressive development to literature, restricting it within certain codes, as antiquated as Papacy, without perceiving that the human intellect cannot divide itself in two halves, and advance with one-half whilst it stands still with the other. History has become a collection of facts, and nothing more; an embellishment, often a burden to the memory; neither a revealer of wisdom, nor a guide to the future; because where you do not put forward prominently facts of a

certain order, where you do not relate them in a manner which reveals an idea, where you do not deduce from them a moral law, what can one fact teach you to-day which another may not falsify to-morrow? What other tendency can history give you, if not that most fatal tendency to doubt? Philosophy does not exist among us. We have some observations on facts; some researches concerning the manner by which certain physiological phenomena are produced, but there is no science of *causes*—there are no primary laws of the intellect. Political movement exists, because where tyranny reaches its utmost limit it necessarily moves the minds of men to hatred and to vengeance, if to nothing else. But enduring constancy in sacrifice, faith in the future and in ourselves, and above all unity of symbol, certainty of the same aim, the science of means, and unwearied propagandism do not exist among us, or are very rare. There is indignation, grief, individual courage; but there is discouragement, division, suspicion, mistrust of everything and of everybody.

"It is of the most urgent importance to withdraw men's minds from such a state—and for this there is no hope but in a powerful unity—in one faith—one bond—one common hope.

"Do you desire to give life and movement to literature, to the arts, and to science? Harmonise them together: point out the intimate connection which runs through all, and give to all a common aim.

"Do you desire that intellect should advance?—Direct it towards the same aim: do not enchain one of its faculties whilst you emancipate another. Inspire it with a grand conception which will render it fruitful, give it a direction, and trust it to itself.

"Do you desire that your citizens should become free?

Begin by giving them a lofty sense of their own dignity, of their own inviolability, of their own power. Do not lower the conception of liberty to them, but raise them to it: convert it into a mission, and create them its apostles: say to them that there is a moral law superior to them, which binds them all, in one bond, to the execution of a great design; to the sacrifice, if necessary, of the individual to society.

"Find, in short, a unity—and prefix it to reform, and to all the efforts towards it. Present yourselves to the nation with a table of duties and of rights.

"Proclaim, in words that the multitudes will understand, the moral *principles* which should preside over their regeneration.

"Religion is the sanction of those rights, of those duties, of those *principles*.

"Papacy is extinct; but Religion is eternal: Papacy is only a form, a form now antiquated, worn out by the *idea* that has undergone a development, and which seeks to manifest itself.

"Catholicism is extinct; but you who watch over its bier, remember that Catholicism is only a sect, an erroneous application, the *materialism* of Christianity. Remember that Christianity is a revelation and a statement of *principles*, of certain relations of man with that which is beyond himself, which were unknown to Paganism. Remember that those principles are the same that are inscribed upon the banner of all lovers of liberty. Remember that religions are not changed by men, but by time, progress, and the manifestation of some new principle; and that whosoever attempts to substitute himself for the age and for those causes, is guilty of a foolish and fatal mistake. Remember, in short, that a religious principle has always presided over two-thirds of the revolutions of single peoples, and all the

great revolutions of humanity; and that to desire to abolish it where you have no other to substitute, where there is neither education, nor any profound conviction of general duties, nor a uniform conscience, nor the habit of high social virtue, is the same thing as to create a void, to open an abyss, which you yourselves will perhaps be the first to fill.

"Perhaps in religion, as in politics, the age of the *symbol* is passing away, and a solemn manifestation may be approaching of the Idea as yet hidden in that symbol. Perhaps the discovery of a new relation—that of the individual to humanity—may lay the foundation of a new religious bond, as the relation of the individual with nature was the soul of paganism; as the relation of the individual with God has been the soul of Christianity. But whatever may be in store for the future, whatever new revelation of our destinies awaits us, it behoves us meanwhile not to forget that Christianity was the first to put forward the word *equality*, parent of liberty—that it was the first to deduce the rights of man from the inviolability of his human nature—that it was the first to open a path to the relationship of the *individual* with *humanity*, containing in its doctrine of human *brotherhood* the germ of a principle, of a law of *association*."

To these thoughts written in 1832, succeeding years, and especially the two last, have given a solemn confirmation. A Pope arose, whose good disposition, progressive instincts, and love of popularity rendered him an exception to the Popes of later times, and Providence, as if to teach mankind the absolute powerlessness of the institution, disclosed to him, in the love and in the illusions of the people, the path to a new life. So great is the fascination exercised by great memories, so great the power of ancient customs, so eager the desire for Authority as the guide and sanction of their

progress, in these multitudes who are said to be agitated by the spirit of anarchy,—that a word of pardon and tolerance from the Pope's lips sufficed to gather round him, in an enthusiasm and intoxication of affection, friends and enemies, believers and unbelievers, the ignorant and the men of thought. One long cry, the cry of millions ready to rush to martyrdom or victory at his nod, saluted him as their father and benefactor, the regenerator of the Catholic faith and of humanity. The experience of three ages, and the inexorable logic of ideas, were at once forgotten ; writers whose intellect and opinions alike had rendered them influential until then as adversaries, now employed themselves in founding around that *One* man systems destined to prepare for him the way to a splendid initiative. Many advocates of liberty of conscience, whom the spectacle of anarchy displayed by the Protestant sects had always disturbed, now began to doubt. The few believers in the future church remained silent and thoughtful. Could it be that history had decided too rashly? Could it be amongst the secrets of Providence that an institution which for ten centuries at least had given life and movement to Europe, should rise again, reconciled with the life and progress of humanity, from its own tomb? Throughout the whole civilised world men's minds, troubled and excited, awaited the *word* which was to issue from the Vatican.

And where now is Pius IX.?

In the camp of the enemy: irrevocably disjoined from the progressive destinies of humanity ; irrevocably adverse to the desires—to the aspirations which agitate his people and the people of believers. The experiment is complete. The gulf between Papacy and the world is open. No earthly power can close it up.

Impelled by the impulses of his heart to seek for popularity

and affection, but drawn on by the all powerful logic of the principle he represents to the severity of absolute dictatorship; seduced by the universal movement of men's minds, by living examples in other countries, and by the spirit of the age, to feel, to understand the sacred words of progress, of people, of free brotherhood, but incapable of making himself their interpreter; fearful of the consequences, and trembling lest the people, raised to a new consciousness of its own faculties and of its own rights, should question the authority of the pontificate—Pius IX. vacillated contemptibly between the two paths presented to him, muttered words of emancipation, which he neither intended nor knew how to realise, and promises of country and independence to Italy, which his followers betrayed by conspiring with Austria. Then, struck with sudden terror, he fled before the multitudes who cried aloud to him *courage;* he sheltered himself under the protection of a Prince, the executioner of his own subjects; he imbibed his tendencies, and in order to revenge himself for the quiet with which Rome, urged in vain to a civil war, was organising a new government—he solicited foreign aid, and he who, from a horror of bloodshed, had shortly before endeavoured to withdraw Roman assistance from the Lombard struggle, agreed that French, Austrian, Neapolitan, and Spanish bayonets should rebuild his throne. Now lost amid the fallacies of secret protocols, the servant of his protectors, the servant of all except of duty and of the desires of those who hoped in him;—he wanders near the frontiers of Rome without attempting to re-enter the city, as if kept back by the phantoms of the slain. The Louis XVI. of Papacy, he has destroyed it for ever. The cannon-ball discharged by his allies against the Vatican gave the last blow to the institution.

Whilst these things were happening, a Prince was pursuing a similar course in the north of our peninsula, accompanied by the same hopes, the same illusions and delusions of the peoples. He was saluted by the title of the *Sword of Italy.* The noblest spirits from all parts pointed out to him Austria and the Alps, and suspended, in order to make the last trial of monarchy, the propagandism of their most cherished ideas. He was preceded by the encouragement of all Europe, and followed by a numerous and valiant army. Where died Charles Albert?

Thus has providence shown to our people, desirous of the right, but lukewarm in faith and too credulous in the illusions of the old world, the powerlessness of monarchy to ensure the safety of Italy, and the irreconcilability of Papacy with the free progress of humanity. The dualism of the middle ages is henceforward a mere form without life or soul: the Guelph and Ghibelline insignia are now the insignia of the tomb. Neither Pope, nor King! God and the people only shall henceforth disclose to us the regions of the future.

The Spirit of God descends now upon the multitudes: individuals privileged in intellect and heart collect, eliminate, and express the results of popular inspiration—hence their power of initiation—but they do not create or destroy. For the dogma of absolute, immutable authority concentrated in an individual, or in an immutable Power, is being substituted that of the progressive authority of the People, the collective and lasting interpreter of the law of God.

This principle, accepted by the people as the highest power in the sphere of political life, under the name of CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, will have its inevitable application in the sphere of religious life. This application will be named the COUNCIL.

Life is One. You cannot arrange its different manifestations so that they can remain independent, or find contradictory expression, without introducing anarchy. You cannot say to the people, *Thou art half free and half enslaved; social life is thine, but religious life belongs to others.* You cannot dismember the soul. Liberty is the gift of God, who rules over, blesses, and renders fruitful *all* the faculties of man, his creature.

And the Pope knows it: he knows he can only reign in Rome as a despot. The political concessions that he may make will be *de facto* only, not *de jure;* and his creatures will withdraw them the day after. Who thinks differently deceives himself. Governments often hasten their fate by suicide; but never consciously.

And we know it well. Upon Pope and upon King, by the slow but inevitable providential education of the human race, and in the name of the inviolability of mind, weighs an equal condemnation.

The question between the temporal and spiritual power is misunderstood by many; and it is important to reduce it to its true signification. To regard it as anything more than a protest against the principle of absolute authority represented by the Pope—to seek to furnish through it a *positive* organic foundation to society—would tend to withdraw the earth and man from religion.

Religion and politics are inseparable. Without religion political science can only create despotism or anarchy. We seek neither the one nor the other. For us, life is an educational problem, society the medium of developing it, and of reducing it to action. Religion is the highest educational principle; politics are the application of that principle to the various manifestations of human existence. The *ideal* remains in God: society should be so arranged as

to approach to it as nearly as is possible upon earth. Worshippers all of God: we should seek to conform our acts to his law. Thought is the *spirit;* its translation into action, into visible external works, is the *social fact.* To pretend, then, to separate entirely and for ever earthly things from those of heaven, the temporal from the spiritual, is neither moral, logical, nor possible. But when the Power representing a religious principle no longer possesses or inspires faith—when, through ages of error, and through the progress of the people, all vital communion has ceased between that power and humanity—when it no longer possesses any *initiative,* but only the strength of *resistance,* the first form assumed by dissent is that of protest and separation. Society, before decreeing the final condemnation of that power, and of the principle upon which it is supported, separates it from its own movement, isolating it in a sphere of inaction, where opinion can judge it fearlessly and dispassionately. Then is raised the cry for the separation of the temporal from the spiritual; and that cry, for those who understand the secret instincts of the people, means:—

"Your mission is fulfilled; withdraw. Our life, our progress, spring no longer from you. The principle which you represent is not ours. We no longer believe in you. In our hearts a purer, larger, and more efficacious religious conception is fermenting, which is not yours. And since you either will not or cannot accept it, remain alone. A solemn memorial of the past which will never return, you are now naught but an idol, a form without life or soul. God and religion remain with us; with us who feel ourselves better than you, and more capable of guiding ourselves through the paths of our earthly country, which should be for us a step towards heaven, a field for

exertion in the mission of the fraternal education of humanity."

And when,—conscious or unconscious of its own mission,—the Roman Assembly, raising in front of the Vatican the symbol of popular majesty, and inscribing thereon the new formula of the religious bond to believers, the sacred words, *God and the people*, declared that the temporal power of the Pope had fallen, *de facto* and *de jure*,—that decree proclaimed :—

"Society banishes you, O Pope, from its fold. Your proved impotence renders all communion of affection, of works, of aspiration between us, impossible. You ought to have guided us; but whilst our souls, irradiated with new light, foresee a vaster *ideal*, and our brows sweat blood in clearing the obstacles from our way, you, dazzled and alarmed, do but mutter to humanity the old formulæ of the middle ages from which all virtue was extracted ages ago; old doctrines of blind resignation to evils that we can overcome, and which the Christian's prayer bids us overcome—imploring that *the kingdom come on earth, as it is in heaven.* What progress have we accomplished through you, for many ages? What victims have you taught us to save? To what classes of sufferers, in mind or in body, have we, through your agency, extended a brother's hand, and said, *Sit with us at the table of equals: rejoice with us in the communion of souls, because for thee also Christ has given his blood?* A people arose in the name of the *Cross* against the oppression of the *Crescent*, and whilst men, stigmatised by you as unbelievers, ran from all parts, re-baptised to faith by the hope to conquer or die for that sign, you spoke not to that people a single word of comfort or benediction! Another people, dear to the church for its faith, and for the long and bloody sacrifices which it has made for its sake—

raised, in the name of its violated temples, destroyed liberties, and abolished traditions, that national standard which once arrested the invading Mahometan under the walls of Vienna, and you—blessed its executioner! And we, thrilling with the lofty idea of love, of equality, of liberty, arose saying: *We will make of Italy an altar upon which we will join hands to pronounce the third Word of unity and life for humanity;—Father bless and guide us;*—but you, having lost all understanding of the mission of humanity and of the providential scheme, through ages of prostitution with the princes of the earth, distrustful of yourself, of us, of the world, and of Providence itself,—drew back in terror. You could do nothing but lament and curse. The energy of faith, the power of sacrifice; the word that consoles and animates, are no longer yours. Our followers die for their faith; you for your faith—flee."

The belief in absolute authority embodied, by the election of the few, or by the chance of birth in an individual, is for ever extinguished in Europe. Belief in Papacy is therefore extinct. The revolt of the human mind against *divine right* applied to princely power inevitably ascends to the Pope, who protects those princes by his word and by his consecration. Papacy, like monarchy, is a corpse. The corruption which is generated around both institutions is only the consequence of their internal decay.

National sovereignty is the remedy universally accepted for preserving society from the total absence of authority, from anarchy. The sovereignty of the Church—*by the church we understand the People of Believers*—must preserve society from the absence of all religious principle and authority.

The Constituent Assembly and the Council: these are the prince and the pope of the future. Those mistaken

men who persist in upholding monarchy by sophisms, expedients, and false doctrines, will not save it; they do but condemn society to a longer period of civil war, amidst illusions, delusions, conspiracies, and violent reaction. Those mistaken men who persist in upholding Papacy by sophisms, expedients, and false doctrines, will not save it; they condemn society to many more years of immorality, doubt, and materialism.

Bury the dead; join hands in loving act and thought, and go forward. God created us for life; and do you fear that he will not reveal himself to his creatures, when,—assembled to interrogate their own hearts upon their own belief and to study the ways of the future,—they invoke his aid?

EUROPE: ITS CONDITION AND PROSPECTS.

(*First published in the "Westminster Review," April* 2, 1852.)

THE literature of the Continent during the last few years has been essentially political, revolutionary, and warlike. Out of ten historical works, seven at least speak to us, from a favourable point of view or otherwise, of a revolution now extinct; out of ten polemical, political, economical, or other works, seven at least proclaim or combat a revolution about to take place. The first bear the impress of terror; the last are full of gigantic hopes, though most imperfectly defined. Calm has fled from the minds of Continental writers. Poetry is silent, as if frightened by the storm now gathering in the hearts of men. Romance becomes rarer every day; it would find no readers. Pure art is a myth. Style itself is changed; when it is not commonplace, when it retains something of that individual originality which every style ought to have, it is sharp, cutting, biting. The pen seems, as it were, sword-shaped; all the world thinks and writes as if it felt itself on the eve of a battle.

From the midst of this tempest, which I point out, because to sleep is to perish amid the storm, voices are heard exclaiming, "Beware! Society is in danger. Anarchy

threatens us. The barbarians are at our gates. Revolutions destroy all the guarantees of order; from change to change we are rushing into nothingness. We have conceded too much; we must retrace our steps and strengthen power at all price." Other voices reply to them,—"It is too late, your society is dead, corrupted; hasten to bury it. The salvation of the world is in *us*, in an entirely new order of things, in a society founded upon a basis diametrically opposed to yours." Flags are raised on high in infinite variety: *Liberty*, *Authority*, *Nationality*, 1815. *Labour*, *Property*, *Rights*, *Duties*, *Association*, *Individualism*—all these devices are displayed aloft. It is the night of the Brocksberg—a sort of intellectual and moral chaos, to which scarcely anything analogous is to be found, unless we go back some eighteen centuries in the history of the world, to the fall of the Roman Empire; when the ancient gods were dying; when the human mind was wavering between the sceptical epicureanism of the masters, and the aspiration of the slaves to the UNKNOWN GOD; when the earth trembled under the steps of unknown races, impelled by a mysterious irresistible power towards the centre of European society.

What is the signification of a crisis thus prolonged, notwithstanding all the efforts which are made to overcome it? Have these *barbarians* of our days a *Rome* in which great destinies are to be accomplished, and towards which, like Attila and his hordes, they are impelled by an invisible hand; or do they march onward to lose themselves in deserts; without a purpose, without a tomb, without leaving any useful memorable trace in history? Are we advancing towards anarchy or towards a new mode of things,—towards dissolution or towards a transformed life? All ask themselves this question; all could resolve it, if the point of view

of each man were not narrowed by his position in some one of the adverse camps; by the now prevailing habit of judging of the depth, the intensity, and the direction of the European current by the passing ebullitions of the surface; and by a prejudice, presently to be defined, which for half-a-century has influenced almost all appreciations of the political situation.

And yet this question *must* be solved. It is a vital one. It necessarily contains a rule for our actions. A law of Solon decreed that those who in an insurrection abstained from taking part on one side or the other should be degraded. It was a just and holy law, founded on the belief,—then instinctive in the heart of Solon, but now comprehended and expressed in a thousand formulæ,—in the solidarity of humanity. It would be just now more than ever. What! you are in the midst of the uprising, not of a town, but of the whole human race; you see brute force on the one side, and right on the other; you march between proscription and martyrdom; between the scaffold and the altar; whole nations are struggling under oppression; generations are proscribed; men slaughter each other at your very doors; they die by hundreds, by thousands, fighting for or against an idea; this idea is either good or evil; and you, continuing the while to call yourselves men and Christians, would claim the right of remaining neutral? You cannot do so without moral degradation. Neutrality, that is to say, indifference between good and evil, the just and the unjust, liberty and oppression, is simply Atheism.

Let us, then, endeavour to distinguish all that there is of permanent from all that is merely accessory and transitory in the crisis; all that will remain, and which demands satisfaction, from that which is only a momentary ebullition, the dross or scum of metal in fusion. The question now is,

how to carry forward the balance of the past half-century to the credit of the half-century to come. I shall endeavour to do this as rapidly as possible; not as summarily, however, as their Excellencies the ambassadors of France, Austria, Russia, and of the thirty-five or thirty-six States of Germany.

Their Excellencies have very recently made a discovery which would remarkably simplify our solution if we could believe them upon their word. According to them, there are in London four or five persons who are the cause of all the disturbances of the Continent. They walk abroad, and all Europe is agitated; they associate themselves for an object, whatever it may be, and the whole of Europe associates itself with them. England has only to abandon her noblest privilege, that of exercising a free hospitality, and to drive these men across the ocean, and Europe would sleep in peace under the bâton of Austria, the knout of Russia, the *cavalletto* of the Pope. Pity that Lord Granville should not have reached to the height of their Excellencies! Pity that for such a peace he should scruple to violate English law and English honour.

No; the agitation in Europe is not the work of a few individuals, of a few refugees, be they who they may; and there is something in this opinion sad and ridiculous at the same time: I say sad, because it evidently shows the inability of the "masters of the world" to comprehend and to abridge the crisis. Individuals are only powerful at the present day, so far as they are the exponents of the condition and collective aspirations of large bodies of men. For sixty years Europe has been convulsed by a series of political struggles which have assumed all aspects by turns; which have raised every conceivable flag, from that of pure despotism to that of anarchy; from the organisation of the

bourgeoise in France and elsewhere as the dominant caste, to the *jacqueries* of the peasants of Gallicia. Thirty revolutions have taken place. Two or three royal dynasties have been engulfed in the abyss of popular fury. Nations have risen, like Greece, from the tomb where they had been for ages buried; others, like Poland, have been erased from the map. Forgotten, almost unknown races, the Sclavonian race, the Roumaine race, silent until now, have disinterred their traditionary titles, and demanded to be represented in the Congress of Nations. Kings and Queens have gone to die in exile. The Austrian Empire, the China of Europe, has been on the brink of destruction. A Pope, drawn along by the popular current, has been obliged to bless a national insurrection, and then to fly in disguise from the capital of the Christian world. Vienna has twice been covered with barricades. Rome has seen the republican banner float above the Vatican. Governments, attacked and overthrown, have ten or twenty times recovered strength, drawn closer their alliances, overrun the half of Europe with their armies, annihilated revolutions, effaced entire generations of revolutionary spirits by the sword, the scaffold, exile, or imprisonment, and crushed, as they term it, the hydra of disorder and anarchy. The heads of the hydra have sprung up again fifty for one; the struggle has recommenced at the foot of the scaffold of those who initiated it; the idea has gained strength beneath the hammer on the anvil; we are now, three years after an European restoration, three months after the *triumph of order* in France, calculating upon and arming for new struggles; and we are told that all this is the work of a few individuals, transmitting from one to another, every ten years, the inheritance of a subversive idea! As well might the conquest of the world by Christianity be attributed to the underground

labour of a secret society. Christian truth emerged from the catacombs, *because the whole world was thirsting for it.* The ancient unity was broken; a new one was necessary. Between these two unities chaos reigned, in which humanity cannot live. It reigns now, because amidst the ruins of an unity in which mankind no longer has faith, a new unity is being elaborated. If a few men have power with the multitudes, it is because these men embody this unity in themselves better than others do. And though you may destroy them to-day, others will replace them to-morrow.

Europe no longer possesses unity of faith, of mission, or of aim. Such unity is a necessity in the world. Here, then, is the secret of the crisis. It is the duty of every one to examine and analyse calmly and carefully the probable elements of this new unity. But those who persist in perpetuating, by violence or by Jesuitical compromise, the external observance of the old unity, only perpetuate the crisis, and render its issue more violent.

Europe—I might say the world, for Europe is the lever of the world—no longer believes in the sanctity of royal races; she may still accept them here and there as a guarantee of stability, as a defence against the encroachments of some other dangerous element; but she no longer believes in the *principle*, in any special virtue residing in them, in a divine right consecrating and protecting them. Wherever they reign despotically, she conspires against them; wherever liberty exists under their sway, in however small a degree, she supports them under a brevet of impotence. She has invented the political axiom, "Kings reign without governing;" wherever they govern, and govern badly, she overthrows them.

Europe no longer believes in aristocracy, the royalty of several; she no longer believes in the inevitable physical

transmission, in the perpetual inheritance of virtue, intelligence, and honour: she believes in it no longer, either scientifically or practically. Wherever an aristocracy acts well—if that ever happens to be the case—she follows its lead; not as an aristocracy, but as a doer of good: wherever it drags itself along in the pride of its old traditions—idle, ignorant, and decayed—she rids herself of it; she destroys it, either by revolutions or by ridicule. The carnival on the Continent looks to the historical order of patricians for its masks.

Europe no longer believes in the Papacy; she no longer believes that it possesses the right, mission, or capacity of spiritual education or guidance; she no longer believes in the immediate revelation, in the direct transmission of the designs and laws of Providence, by virtue of election, to any individual whatsoever; five years ago she was seized with enthusiasm for a Pope who seemed disposed to bless the progress of the human race, and to constitute himself the representative of the most advanced ideas of his age; she despised him as soon as he retraced his steps and recommenced the brutal career of his predecessors.

Europe no longer believes in privilege, be it what it may; except in that which no one can destroy, because it comes from God—the privilege of genius and virtue; she desires wealth, but she despises or hates it in the persons of those who possess it, when it is not the price of labour, or when it arrogates to itself rights of political monopoly.

Now look at the actual organisation of Europe—is it not altogether based upon privilege, by whatever name it may be known? How, then, can one wonder at the struggle which is engendered within it?

Let it, then, be openly declared by every honest man, that this struggle is sacred; sacred as liberty, sacred as the

human soul. It is the struggle which has had for its symbol, since the commencement of the historical world, the grand type of Prometheus; which has had for its altar, during the march of the human race, the cross of Jesus; which has had for its apostles almost all the men of genius, the thousand pillars of humanity. This war-cry which rises from the ranks of the *Proletaire* is the cry of our fathers, the Hussites: *The cup for all, the cup for all!* It is the logical consequence of the doctrine common to us all, the unity of God, and, therefore, of the human race. It is an effort to realise the prayer of Christ: *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!* Yesterday we reverenced the priest, the lord, the soldier, the master; to-day we reverence MAN, his liberty, his dignity, his immortality, his labour, his progressive tendency; all that constitutes him a creature made in the image of God—not his colour, his birth, his fortune—all that is accidental and transitory in him. We believe that every man ought to be a temple of the living God; that the altar upon which he ought to sacrifice to God is the earth, his field of trial and of labour; that the incense of his sacrifice is the task accomplished by him; that his prayer is love; his power, love realised—Association. We believe no more in that narrow dualism which has established an absurd antagonism between heaven and earth, between God and his creation. We believe that the earth is a stepping-stone towards heaven; that it represents a line in the immense poem of the universe; a note in the everlasting harmony of the Divine idea; and that on the accordance of our works with this harmony must depend the elevation of our actual being and our hope of progress in that transformation of life which we call death. We believe in the sacredness of individual conscience; in the right of every man to the utmost self-development

compatible with the equal right of his fellows; and hence we hold that whatever denies or shackles liberty is impious, and ought to be overthrown, and as soon as possible destroyed. This it is which is at the bottom of the ever-recurring struggle in Europe; this it is which prevents either armies, or persecutions, or *coups-d'état* from conquering it; this it is which will insure final triumph.

Now, if fatal errors, vain or absurd desires, false and immoral systems, have gathered around this idea, is it a reason for denying—not the errors, the immoderate desires, the systems—but the idea itself? Is the religious idea an impious thing because heresies have been engrafted upon it? Shall we deny God because the Father of all has been transformed by the monk of the Inquisition into a universal tyrant? Shall the errors of sceptics make us renounce the inviolable rights or the power of human reason?

Such reactions take place only in weak and cowardly natures—for I do not address here men who choose their part through interested and selfish motives. I repeat that it is the duty of every honest and sincere man to study with impartiality the true causes of this prolonged crisis which convulses two-thirds of the populations of Europe; to range himself openly on the side of justice; to combat with the same energy enemies and false friends,—atheists and heretics,—those who deny the right of progress, and those who falsify and exaggerate it. A faction must not be allowed to substitute itself for Humanity; but we must not, on the other hand, allow ourselves, through intolerance or fear, to *treat Humanity as a faction.*

I ask, is there one of my readers who can boldly say, "What you have just declared to be the final object of the European agitation is evil; I recoil from it?" No! Discussion may arise upon the means selected for its

realisation, upon the time, more or less near, of success; not upon the essence, upon the thing, upon the idea itself.

But around this holy aspiration towards the emancipation of oppressed classes and peoples, around this great social thought which ferments in all men's minds, there has arisen such an uproar of discordant and irritated voices; such a jumbling together of petty systems, of fragmentary conceptions, representing in reality nothing but individualities excited by vanity and morbid exaltation; that the aspiration itself, the primitive thought, has become obscure to our eyes. We have mistaken the glare of meteors for the true and steadfast light; we have forgotten what is principal in what is accidental and accessory; we have turned from eternal TRUTH for the possible *realities* of a day.

To some the poniarding of Rossi has appeared to be the programme of the Italian revolution; while others believe that the French revolution and the abolition of all individual property are synonymous. These men forget one thing—the revolution itself; that of 1848, which confiscated nothing, which abolished no right; that of Rome in 1849, which slaughtered none but the foreign soldiers upon its walls. In what we have just indicated there is much more than a simple, an accidental contrast—there is the indication of a constant fact, of which those who seek in good faith to appreciate the crisis should never lose sight; the radical and habitual difference between the language of parties and their acts; between the excited, exaggerated ebullitions of intelligence seeking to progress and brutally repulsed by force,—and its practice, its point of view when it descends into the arena of action. Proudhon himself, if in power, would not organise anarchy. There is hardly an intelligent Communist who, on the morrow of a revolution, would take for his programme the ideal which he had

preached before; there is not one of the preachers of systematic terrorism, who, invested with power, would not recoil from the application of the rules which he had promulgated in defeat. This is in the nature of things. Besides the change which takes place in the same men in different positions; besides the difference between the unrestrained impulses of the writer or the propagandist orator, and the course, regulated by all external circumstances, of the legislator or the representative,—there is the fact, that the work of *preparation* falls mostly into the hands of factions, whilst the practical solution of the crisis belongs to the mass, to the majority of the country. Now the mass, the majority, never desires the impossible. It instinctively feels that it is called upon to continue, not to create Humanity. It takes tradition as its starting point; it advances, but does not break the chain; it is bound by too many habits and affections to the past. If you had fifty revolutions in Europe, not one would essay to establish Communism or terror as a system. Those whom the reading of a pamphlet or an article of a paper inspires with alarm for property or for any other historical element of society, are the *enfans niais*, as the writers themselves are the *enfans terribles*, of our times.

This view is confirmed by facts. The republicans, who under the reign of Louis Philippe had organised themselves into *The Society of the Rights of Man*, affectedly designated their different sections by the names of Robespierre and Marat. The victorious republicans in 1848 commenced by abolishing capital punishment for political offences: property was respected, and all the acts of the triumphant party were characterised by moderation. The Italian revolutions followed the same course. The powers which issued from insurrection in Hungary, at Vienna, throughout

Europe, may have committed errors; they never sullied their career with spoliation or with blood.

But besides this puerile fear, which shuts its eyes to the approaching dawn, because of the fearful phantoms which the night evokes, there exists a general prejudice, alluded to some pages back, which radically vitiates the judgments brought to bear upon the European crisis. The error consists in this, that in seeking an insight into the issue of the crisis, and the tendencies which will govern its latest stage, attention is directed exclusively to France. Some seventy years ago we used to judge all republican ideas by our historical recollections of Sparta and Athens; now we judge all that is called liberty, equality, or association by the meaning given, or thought to be given, to these words in France. From continually fixing our eyes upon Paris, we are no longer capable of seeing or comprehending the rest of Europe—of Europe gifted with an individual life, with an individual organism, of which Paris is only one amongst many centres of activity.

This arises from an idea which I believe to be false, and which, consciously or unconsciously, prevails everywhere—namely, that the initiative of the continental European movement belongs to France.

In reality this initiative is no longer hers. A powerful influence is naturally and inevitably exercised by a nation of thirty-five millions of men, placed in a central position, endowed with warlike habits; compact, centralised, and the most decidedly One amongst European nations. But the initiative of ideas, the moral and intellectual initiative—that which adds a new element to the powers of civilisation, or changes the general point or view of the labours of Humanity—the initiative exercised by the discovery of the New World, by the invention of the Press, by that of gun-

powder, or by the application of steam—the political initiative which leads to a social transformation, to the emancipation of an enslaved class, to the study of a new form of organisation—has never been appropriated by any single nation—by France less than by any other. Like the flaming torches, the *lampada vitæ*, which were passed from hand to hand, in the sacerdotal ceremonies of ancient Rome, this initiative has passed from one nation to another, consecrating each and all missionaries and prophets of Humanity. Were they not all destined hereafter to become brothers, fellow-labourers, equals: each according to his especial capabilities, in the great common workshop of Humanity, towards a common end—collective perfectionment, the discovery and progressive application of the law of life? Thus the idea of the divine Omnipotence sprang from the old eastern world; human individuality from the pagan Greco-Roman world, and more lately from the forests of old Germany; the idea of the equality of souls from the doctrine preached at Jerusalem; the idea of the democratic constitution of the City from the Tuscan and Lombard republics; of commercial association from Bremen and the Hanseatic Towns; the colonising idea from England; the sacredness of human conscience from Germany; the preconsciousness of the unity of Europe, and of the world, twice from Rome; Art from Greece and Italy; Philosophy from all. If there is anything in this sunlike movement of the human mind which especially characterises France, it is not the *initiative*, it is rather the *popularisation* of ideas. French intelligence creates little; it assimilates much. It is essentially constructive; the raw material comes to it from elsewhere. Supple, pliant, active, full of self-confidence, instinctively monopolising, and aided by a language clear, facile, and fitted for all conversational requisites,—the French mind

seizes upon ideas already put forth, but too often neglected elsewhere; it fashions, ornaments, appropriates them, and throws them into circulation; often facilitating that circulation by parcelling out the idea, by dividing it into fragments, as we multiply our small coinage for the benefit of the greater number. Its life, its utility, is there; and it fulfils this special function, which would seem to have been assigned to it, with an *aplomb de maître* and a confidence which insure success.

Il prend son bien où il le trouve; refashions and deals with it as it only knows how, and so well that other nations often unconsciously receive from it in exchange that which they themselves had originated. It is not the less true, however, that the power of initiation, of spontaneous creation, which gives a new impulse to the human mind when it seems exhausted, is not (exceptions apart) the innate faculty of the French nation. She called herself, in the first period of her history, *the arm of the Church;* she has often been since the *tongue* of the Thought of others. Without her, perhaps, this thought would have long remained silent and sterile.

It is from the great Revolution of 1789 that we may date this prejudice in favour of France, whom the Peace of Utrecht had robbed of all preponderance. The bold defiance which, in the name of a great human truth, she then flung to the powers that were; the gigantic efforts by which she maintained it against the coalesced governments of old Europe, followed by the military glories of the Empire, are still working on the imagination of Europe. We all worship the echo, as well as the fact, of power; and the remembrance of the great battles which led the French eagle from Paris to Rome, from the Escurial to the Kremlin, fascinates us as the image of a power which cannot die. The French Revolution has been regarded by all, historians

and readers, as an European *programme;* as the commencement of an era; and as a consequence of this conception we assign a series of succeeding initiatives to the people who gave the first. Every idea originating in France appears to us fatally destined to make the tour of Europe.

This conception is, in my opinion, erroneous. What I say is grave indeed; for, if correct, it must change entirely the point of view from which to appreciate the events of this century. Differing in this respect from all writers on the Revolution, it would be necessary for me to develop my ideas at greater length than my present space permits. I could not, however, in writing upon present European tendencies, avoid expressing a conviction which would completely modify, supposing it to be sound, the judgment passed upon these tendencies and their future. I must ask my readers to supply this deficiency by a fresh study of that revolutionary period, in the hope that I may find an opportunity, perhaps in examining the recent histories of the French Revolution, to bring forward my proofs.

The great French Revolution was not, philosophically speaking, a *programme;* it has a *résumé.* It did not initiate, it closed an epoch. It did not come to bestow a new idea upon the world; to discover the *unknown quantity* of the problem of a new era; it came to place upon a practical ground, in the sphere of the political organisation of society, a formula comprehending all the conquests of twenty-four centuries, all the great ideas morally elaborated by two historical worlds—the Pagan and the Christian—of which, if I may allow myself the expression, it has summed up the balance. It took from the Pagan world its declaration of liberty, of the sovereign *Ego;* from the Christian world its declaration of equality; that is to say, of liberty for all as the logical consequence of the unity of nature in the

human race; hence also it derived its motto of fraternity, the consequence of the Christian formula, *all men are the sons of God;* and it proclaimed—and herein consists its merit towards Europe—that all this ought to be realised here below. Further than this it did not go. As in every great summing up of the progress of the past we can detect the germ of that of the future, the Revolution was marked by many aspirations towards the idea of association, of a common aim, of a collective solidarity, of a religious transformation,—the dominating idea of the present time,—but in its official acts, in the *ensemble* of its march; in its most characteristic manifestations, it has never gone beyond the point of progress already (intellectually) reached, the emancipation of *individuality*. This is why, after having embodied its idea in a *Declaration of the Rights* of man, of the individual, it was only capable of ending in a *man*—in Napoleon. *Right*, that is to say, the individual asserting himself, was its life, its soul, its strength. *Duty*, that is to say, the individual submitting himself to the idea of a collective aim to be attained, never was its directing thought. That thought was the obligation, the necessity of fighting for the conquest of the rights of each; it made, so to speak, duty subservient to rights. It never rose in action to the height of putting forward a *Declaration of Principles*. Its definition of Life has always been—whatever efforts have been made to prove that it went beyond it—the materialist definition—*the right to physical well-being*. It is so even now. And Europe is now agitated and unconsciously led by the other eminently religious definition of life as a mission; a series of duties, of sacrifices to be accomplished for others, in view of an ulterior moral progress.

France has, by her Revolution, borne witness in the civil world to the truths taught in the moral world by Christianity.

She has also said: Behold the man: *Ecce homo.* She has laid down the principle of human individuality in the plenitude of its liberty in face of her enemies; and she has overthrown them all. She has done, politically, the work of Luther; herein is her glory and her strength. But she has not given to mankind the Word of the future, the aim of the individual upon earth; she has not indicated the work to be accomplished, of which liberty is only a necessary premiss—the new definition of Life which is to be the starting-point of an epoch. Her great formula, which the imitative mind of democracy has rendered European—*liberty, equality fraternity*—is only an historical formula, indicating the stages of progress already attained by the human mind. Now, every philosophical and social formula ought—if it pretend to give a new initiative to the nations—to contain an indication of the Law to be followed and of its *necessary* interpreter. The formula which the Italian Revolution inscribed upon the republican banner at Rome and Venice, GOD AND THE PEOPLE, is more advanced and more complete than that of the French republicans.

Since 1815 there has been a great want in Europe—the *initiative* has disappeared; it belongs to no country at the present time, to France less than to any other. Europe is in search of it; no one knows yet by which people it will be seized.

We must not, then—and this is the practical result which I am desirous of reaching—judge of the agitation, the aspirations, the tendencies of Europe, by France. France does not lead; she is only a member of the European commonwealth; simply one link in the chain.

There are in Europe two great questions; or, rather, the question of the transformation of authority, that is to say, of the Revolution, has assumed two forms; the question which all have agreed to call social, and the question of nationalities.

The first is more exclusively agitated in France, the second in the heart of the other peoples of Europe. I say, *which all have agreed to call social*, because, generally speaking, every great revolution is so far social, that it cannot be accomplished either in the religious, political, or any other sphere, without affecting social relations, the sources and the distribution of wealth; but that which is only a secondary consequence in political revolutions is now the cause and the banner of the movement in France. The question there is now, above all, to establish better relations between labour and capital, between production and consumption, between the workman and the employer.

It is probable that the European initiative, that which will give a new impulse to intelligence and to events, will spring from the question of nationalities. The social question may, in effect, although with difficulty, be partly resolved by a single people; it is an internal question for each, and the French Republicans of 1848 so understood it, when, determinately abandoning the European initiative, they placed Lamartine's manifesto by the side of their aspirations towards the organisation of labour. The question of nationality can only be resolved by destroying the treaties of 1815, and changing the map of Europe and its public Law. The question of *Nationalities*, rightly understood, is the Alliance of the Peoples; the balance of powers based upon new foundations; the organisation of the work that Europe has to accomplish.

We should be wrong, however, to separate the two questions; they are indissolubly connected. The men who plead the cause of the Nationalities well know that revolutions, necessarily supporting themselves on the masses, ought to satisfy their legitimate wants; they know that a revolution is sacred whenever it has for its object the progress

of the millions; but that it is an unpardonable crime when it has only for its object the interest of a minority, of a caste, or of a monopoly; they know that the problem now to be resolved is, the association of all the faculties and all the forces of humanity towards a common end, and that no movement can at the present time be simply political.

By dividing into fractions that which is in reality but one thing; by separating the social from the political question, a numerous section of French socialists has powerfully contributed to bring about the present shameful position of affairs in France. The great social idea now prevailing in Europe may be thus defined: the abolition of the proletariat; the emancipation of producers from the tyranny of capital concentrated in a small number of hands; re-division of productions, or of the value arising from productions, in proportion to the work performed; the moral and intellectual education of the operative; voluntary association between workmen substituted, gradually and peacefully, for individual labour paid at the will of the capitalist. This sums up all the reasonable aspirations of the present time. It is not a question of destroying, abolishing, or violently transferring wealth from one class to another; it is a question of extending the circle of consumers; of consequently augmenting production; of giving a larger share to producers; of opening a wide road to the operative for the acquisition of wealth and property; in short, of putting capital and the instruments of labour within reach of every man offering a guarantee of good-will, capacity, and morality. These ideas are just; and they are destined eventually to triumph; historically, the time is ripe for their realisation. To the emancipation of the *slave* has succeeded that of the *serf;* that of the serf must be followed by that of the *workman.* In the course of human progress

the patriciate has undermined the despotic privilege of royalty; the bourgeoisie, the financial aristocracy, has undermined the privilege of birth; and now the people, the workers, will undermine the privilege of the proprietary and moneyed bourgeoisie; until society, founded upon labour, shall recognise no other privilege than that of virtuous intelligence, presiding, through the choice of the people enlightened by education, over the full development of its faculties and its social capabilities.

These ideas, we repeat, are not exclusively French; they are European. They are the result of the philosophy of history, of which the seeds sown by the Italian Vico have been cultivated more particularly by the German philosophers. From the moment that the human race was regarded not only as an assemblage of individuals placed in juxtaposition, but as a collective Whole, living a providentially progressive life, and realising an educational plan which constitutes its laws;—the series of terms composing the civilising progression of which we spoke a little while ago, was sufficient, by showing the conquests of the past, to point out the necessary progress of the future. The belief in the unity of the human race, and in progress, considered not as an accidental fact, but as a law, would naturally beget modern democracy; belief in the collective life of society would lead to the idea of association, which colours all the efforts of modern reformers. The failure of ten revolutions lost by the bourgeoisie did the rest. It was evident that nothing now succeeds if not supported by the masses; and this support is only to be obtained by working openly for them; by giving them an interest in the triumph of the revolutionary idea. Upon the practical ground, the existence of standing armies, sold body and soul to absolutism, has materially

assisted in enlarging political programmes, and in impressing them with a popular and social tendency. It was necessary to find a power to oppose to this mute and blind force, which crushed ideas under the heavy tread of battalions in rank and file: where could it be found if not in the people? The men of the party of progress addressed themselves to them; some through faith, others through policy, through necessity; all learned to know them, to feel for what they were ripe, by seeing them in action. Action is the thought of the people, as thought is the action of the individual. It was a sudden revelation confirming all the presentiments of science, all the aspirations of faith. Justice and duty call upon us to proclaim aloud that upon the barricades as in their passive resistance, after the victory as during the struggle, wherever they were not momentarily led astray by ambitious or mistaken men, the people acted bravely and nobly. The blouse of the workman covered treasures of devotion, of generosity, of patience, suspected by none. At Paris, at Milan, at Rome, at Venice, in Sicily, in Hungary, at Vienna, in Poland, everywhere, the populations gave the lie, by their conduct, to the terrors excited by what was called the unchained lion. There was neither massacre, pillage, nor anarchy. Before the signs of a great idea, at the sound of the words *Fatherland*, *Liberty*, *Independence*, the cry of misery itself was silent. Sublime words were spoken, as by the Paris workmen, when they said, "We can endure four months of hunger for the republic." There were sublime acts, as the pardon granted by the people of Milan to Bolza, the man who had been their persecutor for twenty-five years, "because to pardon was a sacred thing." The women of the Transtevere at Rome, lodged by the Government, during the bombardment, in the

palaces of the exiled nobles, upon their simple promise, in the name of "God and the people," that they would commit neither theft nor injury, religiously kept their word. The people of Berlin took no other revenge for the four hundred and twenty-one victims who had fallen under the troops, on the 18th of March 1848, than that of burning, without taking a single article, the furniture of two traitors, Preuss and Wernicke. Men like Victor Hugo and Lamartine, who had never been included in the ranks of democracy, were converted by the combatants of Paris. Even Pope Pius IX. himself was for a moment fascinated.

Principles and facts, theory and practice, thus united to prove to the men who believe in progress and are willing to act for it, that the object of their efforts ought to be, and can be without difficulty at the present time, the People in its totality, irrespective of propertied or privileged classes. And as it is impossible to dream of the moral and intellectual progress of the people without providing for its physical amelioration—as it is absurd to say, "*Instruct yourself*," to a man who is working for his daily bread from fourteen to sixteen hours a-day, or to tell him to *love* who sees nothing around him but the cold calculations of the speculator and the tyranny of the capitalist legislator—the social question was found inevitably grafted upon the question of political progress. Henceforward they could be only separated by destroying both.

In Italy, in Hungary, in the states composing the empire of Austria, in Poland, in Germany, the social question presents nothing of a threatening, subversive, or anarchical nature. There is no hostile, profoundly reactionary sentiment between class and class; no exaggerated abnormal development of concentrated industry; no agglomerated misery rendering urgent the instant application of the

remedy; no reckless putting forth of systems and solutions. Communism has made proselytes amongst the workmen of Germany; but this ebullition, produced by a thoughtless reaction against the weakness of the revolutionary direction in 1848, is not of serious moment; with the exception of Marx, who was desirous of being the chief of a school at any price, there is not a single man of any intelligence who has given in to the notion that Communism can be established by enactment. Generally, the men who are destined to have an influence upon events believe that association must be voluntary; that it is the duty of Government to encourage, but not to impose it. The chief exceptions are found in France. There, the question which with the other peoples is secondary, and rather the *means* than the *end*, has acquired a preponderating importance and peculiar characteristics. The special condition of existing interests; the existence of large manufacturing centres; the shamelessness with which the bourgeoisie has confiscated to its own advantage two revolutions made by the people; the absence of the question of national unity,—so absorbing for the other nations, and already irrevocably conquered in France,—the enthusiasm, to a certain extent factitious and transient, with which the French mind seizes upon every novelty, have all contributed in that country to give to the social idea a character of exclusiveness and exaggeration which it is unlikely to assume elsewhere.

French *Socialism* has forcibly stirred men's minds; it has raised up a number of problems of detail of which there was no suspicion before, and of which the solution will have a certain importance in the future; it has—and this is a positive benefit—excited a searching European inquiry into the condition of the working classes; it has uncovered the hidden sores of the system founded upon the spirit of caste

and monopoly; it has incited the bourgeoisie to a reaction so ferocious and absurd, that its condemnation, as a governing caste, is consequently assured at no distant period. But it has falsified and endangered the great social European idea, raised up innumerable obstacles to its progress, and aroused against it furious enemies, where it ought naturally to have found friends—in the small bourgeoisie; it has kept numbers of intelligent men from entertaining the urgent question of liberty; it has divided, broken up into fractions, the camp of democracy, for which, if united, an ample field of conquests, already morally won, was assured. The French socialists deny this; but for every impartial mind the state into which France has fallen must be an argument which admits of no reply.

France is still profoundly materialist; not in the aspirations of her people whenever they are collectively manifested, but in the majority of her intellectual men, her writers, her statesmen, her political agitators. She is so almost in spite of herself, often even without knowing it, and believing herself to be the contrary. She talks of God without feeling Him; of Jesus while dressing Him up in the garb of Bentham; of immortality while confining it to the earth; of European solidarity while making Paris the brain of the world. The philosophy of the eighteenth century still possesses her. She has changed her phraseology, but the thing, the parent idea, remains. She is still commenting, under one disguise or another, on the dogma of *physical well-being*, the law of *happiness*, which the catechism of Volney drew from Bentham.

Analysis has almost destroyed in France the conception of life. The faculty of synthetical intuition, which alone gives us the power of embracing the idea of Life, in its unity and comprehending its law, has disappeared with the

religious sentiment; giving place to a habit of dividing an intellectual question into fractions, and of fastening by turns upon one of its manifestations only; thus taking a part for the whole. Mind has become again, in some sort, polytheistical. Every man is a formula, every formula a mere fragment of the civilising synthesis. You have mystics, materialists, eclectics; not a single philosopher. You meet with Fourierists, Communists, Proudhonians; very few French Republicans, making the Republic a symbol of all progressive development. French intelligence attaches itself exclusively to one face of the moral polyhedron. Each secondary end becomes for it the great end to be attained; each remedy for a single malady, an universal panacea. The school of St. Simon recognised in history only *critical* and *organic* epochs; it defamed the one and lauded the other; forgetting that every epoch is *critical* in relation to the preceding one, *organic* in relation to itself or to the future. Other schools establish a perpetual antagonism between religion and philosophy; without ever suspecting that philosophy accepts the fall of one belief only on condition of preparing the way to a new one; and that, generally, the substantial difference between religion and philosophy is this, that the latter is—when scepticism is not mistaken for it—the religion of the individual; whilst the former is the philosophy of the many, of collective humanity. This tendency to cut up into fragments that which ought to harmonise as a whole, is the radical vice of French *Socialism*. It has torn up the banner of the future, and each school, seizing upon one of the fragments, declares it to be the whole. Each word of the device, *liberty*, *equality*, *fraternity*, serves, separated from the other two, as the programme for a school. Each of the two great unalterable facts, the individual and society, is the soul of a

sect, to the exclusion of the other. The individual, that is to say, liberty, is destroyed in the Utopia of St. Simon, in the Communism of Babeuf, and in that of his successors, by whatever name they call themselves. The social aim disappeared in Fourierism ; it is openly denied by Proudhon. It would seem that it is not given to the French to understand that the *individual* and *society* are equally sacred and indestructible, and that it is the discovery of a method of reuniting and harmonising these two things which is the aim of every effort of the present time.

Life is one: the individual and society are its two necessary manifestations; life considered singly, and life in relation to others. Flames kindled upon a common altar, they approach each other in rising, until they mingle together in God. The individual and society are sacred; not only because they are two great *facts*, which cannot be abolished, and which, consequently, we must endeavour to conciliate—but because they represent the only two *criteria* which we possess for realising our object, the truth—namely, *conscience* and *tradition*. The manifestation of truth being progressive, these two instruments for its discovery ought to be continually transformed and perfected; but we cannot suppress them without condemning ourselves to eternal darkness ; we cannot suppress or subalternise one without irreparably mutilating our power. Individuality, that is to say, conscience, applied alone, leads to anarchy; society, that is to say, tradition, if it be not constantly interpreted and impelled upon the route of the future by the intuition of conscience, begets despotism and immobility. Truth is found at their point of intersection. It is forbidden, then, to the individual to emancipate himself from the social object which constitutes his task here below ; and forbidden to society to crush or tyrannise over the individual; but

nevertheless, if we examine the basis of the French *socialist* systems, we shall find nearly all of them defective in one or other of these respects.

This system of dismembering that which is essentially one has produced its effect in the actual state of things. French democracy has separated itself into two camps—that of politics and that of socialism. The occupants of the first call themselves men of revolutionary tradition; the others, prophets, or apostles of social reform. This has produced an absurd antagonism between the men who say, *Let the nation be free, she shall then judge between us all;* and the men who, shutting themselves up in a vicious circle, say, *The nation cannot be free unless she adopt our system*—the vanity of the Utopist substituting itself for the collective mind. Some sects have advocated indifference to the questions of organisation of power; pretending that the social transformation could take place under any form of government. Other fractions of the party have replied by reacting violently against every *socialist* idea; by refusing the co-operation of all those who declared themselves believers in any given system; and by exaggerating to themselves the danger of some exclusive views, destined to disappear, submerged in the first storm of the popular ocean. Others, again, fearing the exactions of the working classes, led astray by the doctrines of the Utopists, have desired to avoid the danger at any price, and have preached to the people during three years that their best policy is peace; abstention from every manifestation, that of the electoral urn excepted. The bourgeoisie, systematically threatened and pointed out to the indignation of the working classes as a hostile power, fell back upon the *status quo*, fortifying itself by leaning on the Government: the people reacted against it by organising itself for

insurrection. Anarchy entered the ranks. A man, gifted with a power of logic, disastrous because applied to the service of a false principle, and able to dominate weak minds by his incredible audacity and his clear and cutting rhetoric, came to throw the light of his torch upon this anarchy, and took it for his motto, with a laugh. Proudhon, an anti-socialist, summed up in himself all the phases of socialism. He refuted one system by another; he killed off the chief of one sect by another; he contradicted himself ten times over. He enthroned Irony as queen of the world, and proclaimed the Void. It is through this void that Louis Napoleon has entered.

I have said that the first cause of this anarchical disorder of French socialism is the *materialism* which still governs the mind of the country. This is so true, that the worship of material interests has become its watchword. I know the exceptions, and I honour them, but they do not destroy the general fact. The great and noble question of the perfectibility of collective humanity, and the emancipation of the classes who are excluded from educational progress by the desperate struggle which they are obliged to maintain for the means of material existence, has been narrowed by the majority of French socialists to the proportions of a mere problem of industrial organisation. That which ought only to be the indispensable *means* has become in their hands the final aim. They found man mistrustful, hostile, egotistical; and they thought to soften and improve him by an increase of wealth. Doubtless they have not denied the religion of the soul, but they have neglected it; and by fixing, almost exclusively, the attention of the masses upon their material interests, they have assisted in corrupting them; they have, instead of destroying its source, enlarged the foundation of egotism, extending it from the bourgeoisie

to the people. St. Simonianism, that is to say, the school which felt so strongly from the first the unity of humanity, that it had made its programme a religious one, finished by the worship of *happiness;* by what is termed the *rehabilitation of the flesh;* by the identification of the *peaceful* epoch of the future with the *industrial* one. Its disciples are, nearly all of them, to be found at the present time in the ranks of the existing power, whatsoever it may be. Fourier, still bolder, denied morality, and gave *pleasure* as the watchword of progress; legitimised all human passions, and materialised the soul by a degrading theory of enjoyment. Communism made all men's wants the foundation of society; it was ever speaking of the right to happiness; it made the abolition of individual property the secret of the regeneration of the world. Proudhon, endeavouring to avoid the destructive character and to produce something organic, placed at the summit of the social pyramid, in the place of God, a bank of gratuitous credit. The worship of material interests spread from the chiefs to their subalterns, to the commonalty of the party; exaggerated, intolerant, vindictive, and exclusive. They continued, in the name of the red republic, the dissolving, corrupting task of Louis Philippe. They spoke of money, when they ought to have stirred up souls in the name of the honour of France; of property to be acquired, when they ought to have spoken of duty; of hatred to the bourgeoisie, whilst military dictatorship was at their doors. They now gather the bitter fruits of their error; some of them even avow it; others are only prevented from so doing by an inexcusable vanity.

Man is not changed by whitewashing or gilding his habitation; a people cannot be regenerated by teaching them the worship of enjoyment; they cannot be taught a spirit of sacrifice by speaking to them of material rewards. It is the

soul which creates to itself a body; the idea which makes for itself a habitation. The Utopist may see afar from the lofty hill the distant land which will give to society a virgin soil, a purer air; his duty is to point it out with a gesture and a word to his brothers; but he cannot take humanity in his arms, and carry it there with a single bound; even if this were in his power, humanity would not therefore have progressed.

Progress is the consciousness of progress. Man must attain it step by step, by the sweat of his brow. The transformation of the *medium* in which he lives only takes place in proportion as he merits it; and he can only merit it by struggle; by devoting himself and purifying himself by good works and holy sorrow. He must not be taught to enjoy, but rather to suffer for others; to combat for the salvation of the world. It must not be said to him, *Enjoy; life is the right to happiness;* but rather, *Work; life is a duty, do good without thinking of the consequences to yourself.* He must not be taught, *To each according to his wants*, or *To each according to his passions*, but rather, *To each according to his love.* To invent formulæ and organisations, and neglect the internal man, is to desire to substitute the frame for the picture. Say to men, *Come, suffer; you will hunger and thirst; you will, perhaps, be deceived, be betrayed, cursed; but you have a great duty to accomplish:* they will be deaf, perhaps, for a long time, to the severe voice of virtue; but on the day that they do come to you, they will come as heroes, and will be invincible. Say to them, *Arise, come and enjoy; the banquet of life awaits you; overthrow those who would prevent you from entering:* you will make egotists who would desert you at the first musket-shot, such as those who, the day after having cried *Vive la République*, vote for Louis Napoleon, if he but makes them tremble, or if he

promises them to mingle a few grains of socialism with his despotism.

It is the instinctive belief in these things which renders the cause of the Nationalities powerful and sacred. It is by this worship of the idea, of the true, of the morally just, that the initiative of European progress belongs to them.

It was not for a material interest that the people of Vienna fought in 1848; in weakening the empire they could only lose power. It was not for an increase of wealth that the people of Lombardy fought in the same year; the Austrian Government had endeavoured in the year preceding to excite the peasants against the landed proprietors, as they had done in Gallicia; but everywhere they had failed. They struggled, they still struggle, as do Poland, Germany, and Hungary, for country and liberty; for a word inscribed upon a banner, proclaiming to the world that they also live, think, love, and labour for the benefit of all. They speak the same language, they bear about them the impress of consanguinity, they kneel beside the same tombs, they glory in the same tradition; and they demand to associate freely, without obstacles, without foreign domination, in order to elaborate and express their idea; to contribute their stone also to the great pyramid of history. It is something moral which they are seeking; and this moral something is in fact, even politically speaking, the most important question in the present state of things. It is the organisation of the European task. It is no longer the savage, hostile, quarrelsome nationality of two hundred years ago which is invoked by these peoples. The nationality which Ancillon founded upon the following principle:—*Whichever people, by its superiority of strength, and by its geographical position, can do us an injury, is our natural*

enemy; whichever cannot do us an injury, but can by the amount of its force and by its position injure our enemy, is our natural ally,—is the princely nationality of aristocracies or royal races. The nationality of the peoples has not these dangers; it can only be founded by a common effort and a common movement; sympathy and alliance will be its result. In principle, as in the ideas formerly laid down by the men influencing every national party, nationality ought only to be to humanity that which the division of labour is in a workshop—the recognised symbol of association; the assertion of the individuality of a human group called by its geographical position, its traditions, and its language, to fulfil a special function in the European work of civilisation.

The map of Europe has to be re-made. This is the key to the present movement; herein lies the initiative. Before acting, the instrument for action must be organised; before building, the ground must be one's own. The social idea cannot be realised under any form whatsoever before this reorganisation of Europe is effected; before the peoples are free to interrogate themselves; to express their vocation, and to assure its accomplishment by an alliance capable of substituting itself for the absolutist league which now reigns supreme.

Take the map of Europe. Study it synthetically in its geographical structure, in the great indications furnished by the lines of mountains and rivers, in the symmetrical arrangement of its parts. Compare the previsions of the future which this examination suggests, with the existing collocation of the principal races and idioms. Open the page of history, and seek for the signs of vitality in the different populations, resulting from the *ensemble* of their traditions; listen, in short, to the cry which rises from the

conscience of these populations through their struggles and their martyrs. Then observe the official governmental map, such as has been sanctioned by the treaties of 1815. In the contrast between the two, you will find the definitive answer to the terrors and complaints of diplomatists. Here is the secret of the *conspiracy* which they are endeavouring to destroy, and which will destroy them. Here also is the secret of the future world.

It is in these thirteen or fourteen groups, now dismembered into fifty divisions, almost all weak and powerless in comparison with five of them possessing an irresistibly preponderating force. It is in this Germany, now divided into thirty-five or thirty-six States; a prey alternately to the ambition of Prussia and Austria, and which acknowledges no other divisions than those of pure Teutonic nationality in the south and of Saxony in the north, united on the line of the Maine. It is in this immense race, whose outposts extend as far as Central Germany in Moravia, which has not yet uttered its national cry to Europe, and which aspires to utter it—in heroic Poland, whom we have so much admired only to forget her at the moment of her downfall—in the Sclavonia of the south, extending its branches along the Danube, and destined to rally itself in a vast confederation, probably under the initiative of Hungary—in the Roumaine race, an Italian colony planted by Trajan in the lower basin of the Danube, which would appear to be called upon to serve as a bridge of communication between the Sclavonian and the Greco-Latin races. It is in Greece, which has not risen from the tomb where it lay buried for ages to become a petty German viceroyalty, but to become, by extending itself to Constantinople, a powerful barrier against the European encroachments of Russia. It is in Spain and Portugal, destined sooner or later to be united as an

Iberian peninsula. It is in the ancient land of Odin, Scandinavia, of which Sweden must some day complete the unity. It is, above all, in Italy, a predestined nation, which cannot resolve the question of its independence without overthrowing the empire and the papacy at the same time, and planting upon the Capitol and the Vatican the banner of the inviolability of the human soul for the whole world.

I have not space for all that I would fain say upon this subject of the nationalities, of which the importance is as yet unrecognised in England. I would willingly trace the first lines of the study which I have suggested; I would willingly apply the deductions arising from it to each of the countries which I have just named, and enter into the details of the movement which has, since a certain number of years, acquired a practical value. This I cannot now do. But I affirm with profound conviction, that this movement, only just commenced in some of the groups, already far advanced for the others, has attained in Italy, in Hungary, in Vienna, in a great part of Germany, and in some of the Sclavonian populations, a degree of importance, which must at no distant period, produce decisive results. It is probable that the initiative of these events will spring from Italy; it is already ripe: but let it come from where it may, it will be followed. An isolated national revolution is no longer possible. The first war-cry which arises will carry with it a whole zone of Europe, and through it Europe herself. It will be the epopee of which 1848 has been the prologue.

In the face of this crisis, which every day brings nearer to us, what is England doing, and what ought she to do?

What she is doing is this.—She goes on from day to day wavering between a policy pretending to renew the alliance of the smaller against the menaces of the larger States,

supporting itself upon a *moderate* party destitute of intelligence, energy, or strength—a policy which has no meaning when the question is between to be and not to be; and another policy which shamelessly says to the country, *We will play the spy for the sake of the established Governments.* The first policy timidly hesitates between that which is and that which will be; it caresses Prussia, condemned to impotence between terror of Austria and of German democracy; it seeks an ally against Austria in the Piedmontese monarchy, twice crushed at Milan and Novarra, and which would inevitably be so a third time if it ever dared to defy again its enemy; it urges the established Governments to concessions; it recoils from their logical consequences; it irritates despotism without weakening it; it raises the hopes of the populations without realising them; it must meet hatred from some, incredulity from others. The second policy openly retraces its steps towards absolutism. Both have brought England to the abdication of herself in the affairs of Europe; they are bringing her sooner or later to absolute isolation. Self-abdication and isolation: is that a life worthy of England? Are nations no longer allied, as individuals are, by duty? Ought they not to do good and to combat evil? Are they not members of the great human family? Do they not share the life of all? Ought they not to communicate something of their life to all? Can they remain strangers to the common task of leading mankind towards perfection, the realisation of the educational plan assigned to humanity? And have we the right of uttering the name of religion, when crime is committed at our very doors which we could prevent, and when we cross our arms in indifference? In 1831, England proclaimed the duty of non-intervention as the basis of European international relations. It was an irreligious and negative principle: we

are all bound to intervene for good; we ought not to be able to intervene for evil. And yet this principle, coming between the two opposing elements, might be intelligible as a means of arriving at the true condition of the peoples and their capacity of realising the progress which they invoke. How has it been maintained? Wherever nations have arisen to organise themselves in a manner more suitable to their present belief and interest, Prussian, Austrian, or French despotism has employed its brute force upon each isolated people; England has not even protested upon the tombs of Rome and Hungary. The menace of the foreigner weighs upon the smaller States; the last sparks of European liberty are extinguished under the dictatorial veto of the retrograde powers. England—the country of Elizabeth and Cromwell—has not a word to say in favour of the principle to which she owes her existence.

If England persist in maintaining this neutral, passive, selfish part, she will have to expiate it. A European transformation is inevitable. When it shall take place, when the struggle shall burst forth at twenty places at once, when the old combat between fact and right is decided, the peoples will remember that England has stood by, an inert, immovable, sceptical witness of their sufferings and efforts. Ancient alliances being broken, the old States having disappeared, where will be the new ones for England? New Europe will say to her, *Live thy own life.* This life will be more and more restricted by the gradual inevitable emancipation of her colonies. England will find herself some day a third-rate power, and to this she is being brought by a want of foresight in her statesmen.

The nation must rouse herself, and shake off the torpor of her Government. She must learn that we have arrived at one of those supreme moments, in which one world is

destroyed and another is to be created; in which, for the sake of others and for her own, it is necessary to adopt a new policy.

This policy is that of the Nationalities, that which will protect openly and boldly their free development; it is a great and a useful policy.

There is evidently an attempt at universal restoration in Europe. From Vienna it has passed to Rome; from Rome to Paris. Where will it stop? It is now hanging over Switzerland, Piedmont, and Belgium; it tends to suppress liberty, the press, the right of asylum. When that shall be accomplished, when England shall be the only European land upon which liberty, the press, the right of asylum, still exist, do you think that an effort will not be made to destroy them there? No army, perhaps, will succeed in landing upon her soil; but is it by invasion only that a country is destroyed? The Holy Alliance renewed, has it not ports to close, obstructions to oppose to travellers? Can it not forbid the introduction of the English press, spread papal corruption, sow divisions between class and class, excite revolts in the colonies. England arms: she authorises rifle-clubs; she speaks of militia; she is then in fear; and yet she repulses the most efficient means of safety that Europe offers her; she leaves the peoples who would be her nearest allies to fall one by one under the attacks of *la terreur blanche;* she renounces with a fatal obstinacy the glorious rôle which the loss of the French initiative yields to the first nation willing to seize upon it; a rôle which would assure to her the first influence in the Europe of the future, safety from all attempts against liberty, and the consciousness of the accomplishment of a duty towards the world. National defences! Her national defences against the Court of

Rome are in Rome herself delivered from French occupation, that living insult to civilised Europe, which has no other object now than that of holding, in contempt of every right, a strategic position in Italy; her best defence against Austria is in Milan, at Venice, in Switzerland, in Hungary; against Russia, in Sweden, in Poland, in the Danubian Principalities; against France, in the alliance of the young nationalities which will shortly furnish her with the opportunity of overthrowing that imperialism which now threatens freedom everywhere, because an army is its slave, with the most dangerous enterprises.

Within the last two or three months a voice has reached us from across the Atlantic, saying, *Evil is being done daily in Europe; we will not tolerate its triumph, we will no longer give Cain's answer to God, who has made us free; we will not allow foreign armies to suppress the aspirations which we hold sacred, the ideas which may enlighten us. Let every people be free to live its own life. To maintain this liberty, we are ready to intervene by word of mouth—if need be, by the sword.* This cry, rising from the majority of the population, and from a part of the official world in the United States, is directed to England. It comes from a branch of her own race. Let her accept it, and rebaptise her alliance with America by a policy worthy of both. There is something great in this idea of an Anglo-American alliance coming from the lips of an exile. The laying of the first stone of that religious temple of humanity which we all foresee, is a labour well worthy the co-operation of the two worlds.

M. RENAN AND FRANCE.*

I.

This book† which, from the importance of the subject and the name of the author, I opened full of desire and hope, has left my mind penetrated with a sense of deep discouragement and sorrow for France. Truly has she need of moral reform! A nation alternating between an indifference which allows her inertly to contemplate the dismemberment of her soil, and a vandalism which transforms the sanctity of the republican faith into a passion of hatred and vengeance, and the divine aim of life into an idolatry of the senses and greed of material good—is irrevocably lost, if some immense effort be not made to restore her to the sphere of high thoughts, the adoration of the ideal, the lost religion of duty and sacrifice, and recall all her children to communion in love and works.

This grand impulse, this regenerating initiative, ought to spring from France's greatest intellects; from those amongst her writers capable of comprehending the causes of the evil and the remedies indicated by her national tradition, if studied conjointly and harmonised with the general European aspiration in regard to the epoch we foresee. Such writers abound in France—where, indeed,

* The following pages may be said to be Mazzini's last public words. The article was concluded on the 3rd of March 1872; he died on the 10th of that month.

† "La Réforme Morale et Intellectuelle," par Ernest Renan.

one of the chief evils of the day is the fact that intellect has so far outstripped morality in its advance—and of these, Renan, a learned and influential thinker, is among the first, and we had a right to expect that a work by him upon "Intellectual and Moral Reform," would contain a powerful analysis of the causes which have cut short the progress of France since 1815, an indication of the methods by which the national organism might be awakened to new life, and an earnest word to his fellow-workers in the intellectual sphere, urging them to join him in a moral crusade which might, perhaps, restore to France the initiative power she has lost. In all of these expectations have I been deceived.

Nor is this my first delusion with regard to those Frenchmen to whom, whether through intellect, capacity of action, reputation, or brilliant antecedents, the mission of guiding their country specially belonged; the duty of urging her forward when hesitating, and of recalling her into the right path when disposed to go astray.

The inertia and self-abdication of those intellectually superior to the mass of their fellow-citizens was general during the late upheaval, and is one of the gravest symptoms of the decay I deplore.

In the sphere of action it was astounding and grievous to see men like Ledru Rollin, Louis Blanc, Edgar Quinet, Schœlcher, Arago, and many others, stand inertly by to witness the insurrection of Paris, which they might, by their personal intervention, have directed towards a nobler aim, and hesitate—silent, uncertain, and worse than useless—between an Assembly which they believed to be ruinous to their country, and a movement which, abandoned to the direction of incapable materialists, could only accumulate disaster on disaster.

In the sphere of thought, the best intellects of France remain mute in discouragement, like Quinet; obstinately persist in vaunting the initiative omnipotence and grandeur of France, like Hugo; or seek a remedy for the ills of the present in a return to the past, like Renan. Not one of them has the courage to declare to France what are the faults and errors which have caused her fall; none dare—fearless of sect or party, but firm of faith in the future—to teach her by what moral annihilation of such vain idolatry of a past often glorious but more often unjust, she may revive to normal and fruitful life, fraternal and harmonious with the life and destiny of Europe.

Dante had this courage towards us Italians.

The habit, too prevalent everywhere, but conspicuously so in France, of selecting a scapegoat in an individual or group of individuals, and laying upon him or them the burden of the faults or misfortunes of an entire people, is fatal; because it either leads to adulation or lulls to inertia. Napoleon—his miserable parody, the nephew—the superstitious reverence professed by the courtiers of one Bourbon dynasty towards the past—the egotism centred in the present, of Louis Philippe—all these are but incidents, whether vulgar or heroic, in the history of a nation; they are not causes, but consequences. I do not seek to diminish the faults of individuals, nor the tremendous responsibility which weighs upon those who trade upon the vices of a people in order to win power or riches for themselves; but the sources of the evil lie deeper, and the tempter only enters where a breach is already made. And when a nation which changes its rulers and its form of government every fifteen or twenty years, drags its course through more than two-thirds of a century, alternately rising and falling, only to rise and fall again, within the

same fated circle; perennially aspiring towards progress, yet incapable of advancing one single step upon the path towards it—the mischief has penetrated into its vitals. It is necessary to search it out, define it, and attack it at the root, regardless of praise or blame. There are no signs of any attempt to do this in France. No such attempt is made among those whose eyes are fixed on France in my own country, where, in spite of the brief intellectual rebellion, roused by recent outrages endured, the old prestige is still so dominant, that world-wide hopes are kindled by every rumour of an *émeute*, and every wild threat uttered by Paris or Lyons.

It is thirty-seven years since I first published my conviction that the character and progress of the democratic movement in France and Europe were falsified and delayed by two fundamental, vital errors: the opinion, rooted in all Europe, and most firmly in my own country, that the initiative of the movement of civilisation is the enduring and quasi-inalienable heritage of France; and the belief, blindly accepted by the party of action in France, that the revolution of '89 had initated a new epoch, and that the actual work before us was, therefore, merely a work of deduction,—of the practical application of the principles which were the informing spirit of that revolution. Of the first of these errors I have frequently spoken: the second is the key to the actual condition of France, and this book of Renan's compels me to draw attention to it.

The political theory which dominated alike the great achievements and the great legislative manifestations of that revolution was, the *theory of Rights;* the moral doctrine which promoted and perpetuated it was, the materialist doctrine which has defined life as *a search after happiness on earth.* The first inaugurated the Sovereignty

of the *Ego:* the second inaugurated the Sovereignty of *Interests.* The few isolated gleams of light thrown upon the path of the future by individuals who died prophets or martyrs of other ideas and other aims are of no account in the balance (no great revolution could be without such), the fundamental character of the revolution was as I have shortly stated it. France made it her own: she in no way altered it when the violence of the agitation was succeeded by despotism; she has shown no indication of altering it since her recent defeat.

The consequences—since every principle adopted, inevitably generates a method—are obvious to all who understand the logic of history. The Rights of different individuals or of different orders of society, when neither sanctified by sacrifice fulfilled, nor harmonised and directed by a common faith in a providential moral law, will sooner or later come into collision and lead to reciprocal shock; and each reassertion of such rights will wear the aspect of war and hatred. The absence of a law of duty, supreme over all rights, and to which all can therefore appeal, gradually and inadvertently leads men to the acceptance of *les faits accomplis:* success is gradually taken for the sign and symbol of legitimacy, and men learn to substitute the worship of the actual for the worship of the true; a disposition which is shortly after transformed into the adoration of Force. Force is by degrees accepted and sought after, even by those who invoke the holy names of justice and truth as the principal means of their achievement and application. The guidance of liberty is entrusted to the weapons of tyranny; the revolution is incarnated in St. Just and Robespierre; and *terror*, elevated into a system, assumes the title of an energetic apostolate.

When the revolution, either extinguished by a successful

soldier or by the peaceful Machiavelism of a deceitful prince, is superseded by a new order of things, the nations educated by such political doctrines as these, still maintain them as the directing spirit of their governmental organisation, and translate *Force* into *administrative centralisation* —the concession of the monopoly of public life to the state—and the repression or neglect of every element that endeavours to emerge from a condition of inertia into one of practical activity. Meanwhile the seeds of egotism are insinuated into the hearts of men by the false definition of life as a search after happiness; the good impulses which, in the fervour of youth or the excitement of a violent general commotion, suggested golden visions of universal happiness and perennial harmony between individual and collective interests, are blunted in less stirring times by the cold calculations dictated—in the absence of any faith to prescribe duty—by age, or by the evil realities of the present.

Those who have succeeded, by means of a temporary fraternisation with the people, in obtaining what they required, unmindful of their promises and of the pact of solidarity to which they had sworn, content themselves with the quiet enjoyment of their own rights, and leave the people to acquire theirs in their turn, if they can, and how they can. Material interests become the arbitrators of all things; riches and power are held synonymous with greatness in the mind of the nation. National policy is converted into a mere policy of distrust, jealousy, and division between those who suffer and those who enjoy; those who are able to turn their liberty to profit, and those who have naught of liberty but the empty name.

International policy loses sight of all rule of justice, all love of righteousness, and becomes a policy of mere egotism

and aggrandisement; at times of degradation, and at times of glory bartered for at others' expense. Intelligence embellishes both crimes and errors by sophism and system; teaches indifference or mute contemplation in philosophy; lust and the worship of the external in art; stupid submission or savage rebellion in politics; and the substitution of a problem of *production* for the human problem in economy; or,—turning again to the past,—renounces action and writes history.

The expiation follows upon the crime: more or less immediate, more or less severe; but inevitable and inexorable.

The situation created for France by the adoption of the theory of Rights, of Well-being as the aim of life, is as follows:—The expiation which commenced in the impossibility of breaking through the fatal circle of the present and advancing towards the future, has entered into a second and more decisive period, and is destined to be carried still further, if those French thinkers who are capable of true, manly patriotism, do not come to a mutual agreement resolutely to declare the truth to their erring countrymen. Such truths, when uttered by foreign lips, assume an appearance of antagonism where none really exists, and awaken to resistance the pride which survives disaster.

Instead of separating the part of the thinkers from the part of the people, as is far too often done by Renan, Montegut, and others—all those men in France who, whether few or many, combine capacity and influence with an austere love of country, should unite in a periodic and continuous apostolate of the truth.

That truth is—

The theory of Rights may be able to complete the

destruction of a form of society either tyrannous or sinking into decay ; it is incapable of founding society anew upon a durable basis. The doctrine of the Sovereignty of the *Ego* can only create despotism or anarchy. Liberty is a means of reaching good ; it is not the aim.

Equality, as understood in its absolute material sense, is an impossible negation of nature : were it even possible to found it, it could only lead to immobility. The secret of a well-organised social system cannot be discovered through the medium of the suffrage, whether exercised at the will of one, of a few, or of the whole people ; unless the vote is based upon, starts from, and expresses their anterior acceptance of some ruling moral Principle—a principle so harmonising the religious and historical tradition of the nation with the intuitions of individual conscience as to become the informing spirit of a whole epoch, during which it will be interpreted and practically applied by the people. The "people" is not any fraction, however vast, but the *ensemble* of all the individuals and all the classes associated to form a nation, under the guidance of a common faith and a common pact, indicating a common aim ; that Aim is sole sovereign.

Revolution is only sacred and legitimate when undertaken in the name of a new aim upon the path of progress, capable of ameliorating the moral, intellectual, and material condition of the whole people : revolutions undertaken in order to substitute the systematic supremacy of any single fraction of the people for the rest, are naught other than rebellious, as dangerous as unfruitful.

Every true revolution is the substitution of a new educational problem for the old. True government is, the intellect, the sense of the people, consecrated to the work of carrying out that new educational principle in the sphere of

facts. Everything depends upon so organising the government that it shall be alike bound to be and capable of being the true interpreter of that principle, and have neither the temptation nor the power to falsify it; but all the theories of government founded upon distrust, suspicion, resistance, liberty *per se*, or antagonism between the governing power and the governed, as upon an organic idea, are characteristic of a period of transition · a generous but temporary protest against an abnormal and tyrannical condition of things, but inefficacious and incapable of constituting a normal and fruitful national life.

Authority is sacred when it is neither the corpse of a dead authority, nor a lie assuming its name, but entrusted with and able to fulfil the mission of representing and developing the moral principle of the epoch; and the eternal problem of this world is—not the destruction of authority, but the search after, and substitution of, a new authority for such authorities as are false or extinct. Nothing is destroyed, nothing is created; but all things are transformed in conformity with the stage of education which we have reached or are capable of reaching.

Education, the fatherland, liberty, association, the family, property, and religion—all these are undying elements of human nature: they cannot be cancelled or destroyed, but every epoch has alike the right and the duty of modifying their development in harmony with the intellect of the age the progress of science, and the altered condition of human relations. Hence democracy, informed and enlightened by these ideas, must abandon the path of negations; useful and opportune so long as the duty before us was that of breaking asunder the chains that bound mankind to the past; useless and barren now that our task is the conquest of the future. If it do not forsake this path, it can but

doom itself to perish—as all mere reaction must perish—in anarchy and impotence.

Life is not the search after a well-being, a happiness which is impossible on earth. Life is a mission, or it has neither value nor meaning. Life is not our own—it is of God; it has, therefore, an aim and a law. To discover this law, to gradually ascertain this aim, and temper our thoughts and actions in accordance with it, is our task. The holy formula of duty must rule it from on high. Man has no rights from nature, save only *the one right of liberating himself from every obstacle impeding his free fulfilment of his own duties.* All our other rights are simply the consequences of our own actions: of the fulfilment of our duties. Material possessions, like intellectual possessions, are merely means of fulfilling these; the instruments by which to achieve our mission—the aim; and they also are sacred in view of that aim—by regarding them as the aim of life, we may possibly succeed in transporting the egotism of one class into another, but we shall never annihilate egotism for the general good.

Whatsoever the law may be, whatsoever the aim assigned to us, and of which clearer glimpses are revealed to us from epoch to epoch, we can neither advance in the discovery of the first, nor the realisation of the second, without calling *all* the forces of humanity into play. Our intimate union with our fellows is therefore a duty. Each of us lives, not for himself, but for all; and we cannot fulfil our own progress apart from that of the rest. The supreme virtue is sacrifice; to think, to act, and, if need be, to suffer, not for ourselves but for others—for the triumph of good over evil. The conditions of the problem remain the same; the achievement of the means of well-being for all, continues to be our task either way; but the spirit and intention in

which the task is undertaken, the difference of the aim which those means are intended to realise, will produce different results, and educate mankind to love and virtue, not to the odious egotism which is the plague of the world at the present day.

France forgot these rules of life: she surrendered her noble instincts to materialism; her inborn love of humanity to idolatry of her own power; her adoration of the ideal to an ignoble greed of enjoyment; her aspiration towards the future to a blind, vain-glorious adoration of a revolution which merely concluded an epoch of the past; her love of her sister nations and her faith in their equality, to the dream of a moral dominion and a monopoly of perennial *initiative*, which is not granted to any nation. Her recent misfortunes are deserved; they are the expiation of her unfulfilled promises to the peoples; of her abandonment of Poland, her invasion of Spain in 1823; of that class-hatred which has taken the place of the sacred republican apostolate among her people; of her servile acceptance of the Second Empire; of Rome, Mexico, Nice, and the late war.

Before France can redeem herself she must repudiate the last fifty-seven years, and enter upon a radically different course.

II.

THE frank and virile language which I had hoped to hear addressed by French thinkers to their countrymen, is not to be found in this work of Renan's. In order to promote the revival of France in the future, he evokes and strives to recall to life the France of the past—a past concluded by the revolution of 1789, and interred for ever. Renan is

a monarchist. Looking back over the history of France, he sees that monarchy founded the territorial unity of France, and from this fact, which—historically speaking—he even exaggerates, he assumes that French nationality ought now, as hitherto, to remain monarchial, and that the error of the Revolution was the attempt to found liberty while decapitating the monarch and monarchy. It is true that enduring institutions can neither be created *à priori* by imitating an ideal type suggested by the example of any given people at a different epoch, nor by the solitary intuition of an individual. This error, which Renan attacks, and into which nearly all the modern socialists have fallen, is one I have never shared. Institutions are not created, they are deduced; they are the issue of the inherent tendencies and special faculties of a people; of the social organisation and customs slowly evolved among them, and fitting them for some special, determinate function among their fellow nations; of that historic tradition which reveals to us their law of life. But although the study of the tendencies, faculties, and tradition of a people may, and ought to guide us to the discovery of the principle by which (until all its consequences are exhausted) their laws and institutions should be ruled and governed, it cannot determine the choice of the methods best calculated to reduce that principle into practical reality. The error of Renan—an error almost incomprehensible in a thinker—is precisely that of confounding the principle with the methods of its application. Monarchy is not a principle: it simply represents an administrative method, an instrument which in time becomes worn out, and requires to be replaced and superseded by another.

That which we are bound to seek from the historic

tradition of a people is the indication of its mission in the world; and to this, when discovered, we are bound to shape and temper their education and their laws; but the question how and in what direction that mission shall be fulfilled among the nations, is a problem varying from epoch to epoch.

Rome had, more incontestably than any other people, the mission of European civilisation, the formation of the Latino-Germanic world. But that mission (which ought still to constitute an element of our international policy) was fulfilled by different methods; by the sword of the Republic and the Empire, during the first great Roman epoch; by the Papal word of Christian evangelisation, and the colonising power and example of our communes, in the second great epoch.

A principle endures throughout long ages; until (as I have before said) the whole of its vital and generative power has been identified with and incarnated in humanity. The instruments, or organisms employed in the service of that principle, are more often changed or modified according to the progressive education of the people. It is true, though less absolutely true than Renan appears to believe,* that monarchy—by its constant warfare with the feudal lords—contributed to the formation of French national unity; as the aristocracy of England, by their opposition to the despotic tendencies of the Monarchy, contributed to the development of the dominant national characteristic.

* The French communes, though inferior in origin, character, scope, and methods to the communes of Italy, are, nevertheless, an important element in the history of France; and by the uniformity of their movement during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, prepared the way for national unity. Renan never alludes to them, as he never alludes to the noble efforts of Stephen Marcel and Robert Lecoq in the fourteenth century, nor to Joan of Arc, nor the bold demands of the

It is also true that it is to the exercise of that unifying office—for its own ends—by monarchy, that much of France's tendency towards political administrative centralisation is due; as well as her readiness to submit to any individual crowned with the prestige of victory or dynastic tradition; her endeavours to implant liberty by violent means; her substitution of military glory for the work of fraternity and affection, and her struggles after an Equality, frequently misunderstood, but invariably sought after and regarded as superior to every other gain. And thus in England, the long struggle of the patriciate against the unlimited power of the king, generated a tendency towards decentralisation, towards the worship of individual liberty before all things, and the habitual reverence for the aristocracy as an historic element of the nation.*

But, because the first stage of the education of a people was directed by a certain institution, ought we to forget that the subsequent stages demand other instructors? Because the historic element is important in the life of a people, ought we to deny the intuition, spontaneity, and

States-General in 1641, nor to many other popular and bourgeoise manifestations. The importance of those movements was felt by Philip Augustus, Saint Louis, Philippe le Bel, and the kings who succeeded him; but while availing themselves of them in order to compel the submission of the feudal lords, the kings did their utmost to curtail or misdirect their action. Monarchy promoted the territorial unity of France: her moral unity—the soul of a nation—arose there, as elsewhere, out of the instincts of the people.

* We Italians owe our national tendencies to no monarchical or aristocratic element whose history is indissolubly linked with our own. Such vitality as the aristocratic element had amongst us, was the vitality of great *families*, not of a compact and active party united by a common aim. And not to monarchy, but to our people only, belongs the *initiative* of every enterprise in aid of national unity or liberty.

presentiment of a new future, actually existing in that people? Because our communes were great, ought we to cancel the common country, retrace our steps, and remain motionless among the graves of our fathers? Because certain manifestations of life are displayed before us, shall we confound them with life itself, and, by dooming it to ceaseless agitation within the fatal circle traced by those past manifestations, make of the future a mosaic of substances disinterred among ruins?

Life is immortal: throughout the indefinite series of its manifestations it assumes form after form, according to the immediate and secondary aims which it has to reach in the course of its journey towards the supreme, final aim. The theory of Renan contradicts the true conception of history, and denies that law of progress which is henceforth the recognised and accepted consequence of the study of human things, and will be the basis of the life of the epoch towards which we are rapidly advancing.

The error of the French revolution was not the abolition of monarchy. It was the attempt to build up a republic upon the theory of Rights, which, taken alone, inevitably leads to the acceptance of *les faits accomplis;* upon the Sovereignty of the *Ego*, which leads us, sooner or later, to the Sovereignty of the strongest *Ego;* upon the essentially monarchical methods of extreme centralisation, intolerance and violence—upon that false definition of life of which I have spoken above, given by men educated by monarchy and inspired by a materialism which, having cancelled God, had left itself nothing to worship but Force. When the most powerful *Ego* of the period—Napoleon—arose, supported by Force, and said: "*Bow down*," the revolution bent before him, and (with very few exceptions) all who had sworn to live and die free men, held their

peace, and resignedly seated themselves at the desks of the *Institut*, or upon the benches of the *Senat Conservateur*. In this contradiction between the methods and the aim; in this immoral education, by means of which monarchy has led the good instincts of the French people astray, and against which the highest intellects of France did not contend as they ought to have done—lie the real causes of the manifest impotence of France. It is but the other day that the *Government of the Defence* dispatched the *republican*, Mark Dufraisse, to declare to the Italians of Nizza—"*Habitants de Nice, vous appartenez désormais à la France*," forgetting that the original plebiscite with which France gave herself to Louis Napoleon having been overthrown, every subsequent Imperial plebiscite was by right overthrown also. Now, Frenchmen select as the Representative of a Republic, Thiers, the Frenchman of all others most imbued with the Napoleonic policy, which he is even now attempting to carry out—like a clumsy copyist—towards Italy and the Papacy.*

Monarchy—having long since exhausted that portion of a mission which circumstances had assigned to it, and to which it was often false,—overthrown by a revolution which summed up all anterior attempts of the popular element—newly arisen, after the Napoleonic dictatorship, by help of foreign bayonets like a galvanised corpse,—re-denied every fifteen or eighteen years by new revolutions,—guilty of having twice drawn foreign invasion into France,—unsustained by faith even among its servants,—supporting itself by pandering to the interests or greed of the bourgeoisie and a fraction of the people,—possessing no single element of genuine or spontaneous life, and constrained to maintain the semblance of life by compromises

* 1872.

which degrade, concessions it studies to betray, and hypocrisies which avail but for a brief space while they dishonour—in conditions such as these, monarchy, whether of Chambord, Orleans, or Bonaparte, may add another stratum of corruption to the many existing in France; it cannot recall her to life.

It is grievous to see a man of Renan's intellectual worth propose monarchy as a remedy. It is amazing to see him, subjugated by the logical consequences of a first error and dragging himself from ruin to ruin, from rubbish to rubbish, seeking the elements of new life in a *réchauffé* of institutions substantially evil, and at the present day impossible.

Religious and political institutions once extinguished by the work of time cannot be rekindled, and when Machiavelli said that it was necessary from time to time to carry things back to their beginnings, he was false to his own great intellect. The attempts to recall Christianity to its primitive virtues; to re-link the Papacy with the emancipated and enlarged life of the peoples, or to renew the vital spirit and initiative power of monarchy in Europe, are all and equally the dreams of a mind diseased, struck with intellectual amaurosis, and incapable of seeing the inevitable destiny hanging over Europe.

Art itself is incapable of renewing its vitality at the sources of the past. The attempt headed by Overbeck in Germany, the imitations of the Umbrian school, the religious efforts of some of the English pre-Raffaellites, all have failed and will fail. These artists may revive the forms, they cannot revive the soul of the old painters whom they select as their models. Fra Angelico knelt in tearful prayer before painting, and these men do not pray. Faith in the Christian dogma is extinct in the hearts of men.

Renan proposes to re-create an aristocracy: "pas de royauté," he says, "sans noblesse; ces deux choses reposent au fond sur le même principe." (Page 77.)

And this is true; but it is an argument in convalidation of our republican faith. Who can create an aristocracy? Napoleon attempted it and produced a miserable parody of the past. He did but create enemies, or prompt deserters from his own cause, and for France a laughing-stock, composed of titles, ribbons, and coats of arms.

"La base de la vie provinciale devrait ainsi être un honnête gentilhomme de village, bien loyal, et un bon curé de campagne tout entier dévoué à l'éducation morale du peuple." (Page 78.)

And a few pages earlier:—

"La conscience d'une nation réside dans la partie éclairée de la nation, laquelle entraîne et commande le reste. La civilisation à l'origine a été une œuvre aristocratique, l'œuvre d'un tout petit nombre (nobles at prêtres), qui l'ont imposée par ce que les démocrates appellent force emposture; la conservation de la civilisation est une œuvre aristocratique aussi. . . . La France de même avait été créee par le roi, la noblesse, le clergé, le tiers état. Le peuple proprement dit et les paysans, aujourd'hui maîtres absolu de la maison, *y sont en réalité des intrus, des frelons impatronisés dans une ruche qu'ils n'ont pas construite.*" (Page 67 *et passim.*)

I will not waste time in commenting upon the hard, insolent forms of expression adopted by the writer in speaking of the men who for ages maintained the glory, unity, and progress of France with the sweat of their brows and their hearts' blood. But where is the French village gentleman to be found? where the curé exclusively devoted to the moral education of the people? And, to go further back, where is the *enlightened* aristocracy which is, above every class, the depository of the national conscience? A patriciate cannot be created. It is either the growth of

conquest (Germanic or other), implanted by the sword in lands enervated and corrupted by despotism and incapable of self-defence, or of indisputable intellectual superiority, or of long service rendered to their country by certain wealthy and privileged families. The old patrician families are either extinct or have degenerated through the slothful idleness of ages. The debts and mortgages contracted by unworthy descendants have transferred the most stable portion of their wealth—their estates—to the hands of plebeian money-lenders; and, in the meantime, navigation, improved methods of communication, industry, commerce, and unwearying perseverance, have created a new Power in the wealthy bourgeoise class. The spread of education, the press, and the spirit of the age, all of which are resolutely bent on progress, have abolished all class superiority of intellect; and both science and inspiration are now found among all classes of citizens. At the present day it is a rare thing to find a patrician name fixed to any of the scientific, philosophical, political or literary works which advance civilisation; rare to find such a name at the head of any of the numerous provident or benevolent enterprises, or national productive enterprises tending to the progress of the popular classes. The hereditary aristocracy of blood no longer exists in France, except in name; the manufacturer has destroyed the *gentilhomme*. The sole aristocracy of to-day is the aristocracy of wealth; the sole aristocracy of to-morrow will be the eternal, divine, beneficent aristocracy of intellect at its highest power—genius; but that, like everything that descends from God, will arise among the people, and labour for the people.

States can only be founded upon elements which are at once living and life-giving; and life is synonymous with progress, with initiative. Monarchy and aristocracy have

no longer sufficient capacity for the first, nor sufficient power and daring for the second. Monarchy either resists or compromises; aristocracy, in the slow suicide of idleness, both serves and ignores the restless advance of humanity. Can you, by uncovering a tomb, awaken life within its walls?

"Le victoire de la Prusse a été la victoire de la royauté de droit quasi-divin (de droit historique)."

No; the Prussian monarchy is the most recent in Europe; the true victory was the victory of German nationality over those who assumed to impede its development. The threat against the Rhine produced Sedan. It was through that stupid threat that Southern Germany and the Catholic element, upon which Louis Napoleon had calculated against Prussia, were at once ranged in the front rank against him. The King, by "quasi-divine right," only conquered because he took the field wrapped in the flag of unity.

Monarchy, aristocracy, two Chambers with secret sittings, Paris denied the right of electing a mayor, a council, or a national guard; China colonised through conquest—all these remedies, suggested by Renan for the pressing ills of the present, would not save France from decay. The true remedy is quite other, and Renan has strangely dwarfed the problem. A sentence like the following—

"S'il est vrai, comme ill semble, que la royauté et l'organisation nobiliaire de l'armée sont perdues chez les peuples Latins, il faut dire que les peuples Latins appellent une nouvelle invasion Germanique et la subiront,"

is sufficient to prove him incapable of grasping and comprehending the subject in its full magnitude. The German invasion which overwhelmed the Latin races in the fifth

century, did not triumph because those peoples lacked monarchs or patricians; but because monarchy—sunk into a capricious despotism—no longer fulfilled any mission, and the patriciate, a shadow of its former self, understanding nothing and caring nothing for nationality, lacked the energy to identify its destiny with that of the country; because wealth had substituted materialism for the old religion and the old faith in the future of Rome; because that future already belonged to Christianity, and the incapable masters of the Latin races perceived it not; because the writers of Rome were sceptics, her wealthier classes insatiably voluptuous and corrupt, and her people (the Christians excepted) brutal, superstitious, grasping and servile.

The problem set before France is triple: political, social, and religious. It is necessary to secure to the country the organisation most fitted to replace her on the path of progress, to solve the labour question, and to elevate morally, intellectually, and economically the whole of the numerous class called upon by the times to enter as partner into the social firm, or to destroy it; and by means of a religious education to establish a general duty, and awaken a general sense of the necessity of fulfilling it.

As to the political problem, I have already said that Renan proposes to solve it by a return to the past. Of the social problem he does not speak; and he makes the religious problem the subject of the most singular, and—I must add—immoral compromise that could enter into the brain of a thinker. Addressing himself to the Church, he says:—

"A un certain degré de la culture rationnelle, la croyance au surnaturel devient pour plusieurs une impossibilité; ne forcez pas ceux-là à porter une chape de plomb. Ne vous mêlez pas de ce que

nous enseignons, de ce que nous écrivons, et *nous ne vous disputerons pas le peuple :* ne nous contestez pas notre place à l'université, à l'académie, et *nous abandonnerons sans partage l'école de campagne.*"

How a book in which such things are written can be entitled "La Réforme intellectuelle et morale,"—how a book which thus sanctions a dual morality, which says:—*Give to us, literary men, the truth; leave the people to error,*—a book which assumes the possibility of an *active* fraternisation in a single national aim, between men holding the doctrine of the *Fall*, and men holding the doctrine of *Progress;* between men who rest their hope of salvation upon *grace*, and men who believe in a *just* retribution following upon human action; between men who regard the earth as the dwelling-place of *fated* sin and error, and men who regard it as a single stage upon the ascent toward the eternal ideal—I cannot understand. This may be the monarchical doctrine—ours it can never be.

Let us remain republicans and apostles of our faith, for the people and with the people: reverencing genius, but on condition that, like the sun, it diffuse its light, warmth, and life upon the multitudes. Truth is the shadow of God on earth, and he who seeks to monopolise it to himself is an assassin of the soul; even as he who hears the cry of an agony he might relieve, yet passes on, is an assassin of the body. Intellect, like every other faculty given by God, is given for the benefit of all; a double duty towards his brother-men devolves upon him who has more than the rest. Our life should be an incessant apostolate—in word, in deed, and in example—of that which we believe to be the truth. He who sets bounds to that apostolate, denies the unity of God and of the human family; he who despairs of the intellect of the people denies history, which shows us the unlearned ever the first to seize and comprehend,

through the heart's logic, the newest and most daring truths of religion.

It is true that the people in France, as elsewhere, are now misguided and led astray by demagogues who trade upon the credulity of some and the ignorance of others; led astray by those materialist desires to which the leaders of the socialist schools have dwarfed a problem essentially moral; led astray by their exaggeration of principles true in themselves, and by the dominating ideas of the old Revolution, just in their day as an inevitable rebellion against anterior wrongs, but which France persists in regarding as prophetic of a new epoch; and led astray by errors which Renan himself condemns (with occasional exaggeration however) in some exceedingly fine pages (241 *et passim*).

But are we not in a period of transition? Have not the same errors been traceable in all historic periods of transition? And did not they vanish after a while, leaving the Idea around which they had accumulated, shining forth with pure and beneficent light? Is not the hour before dawn ever the darkest in the mental, as well as the physical heaven? and shall we, from irritation at the vapours by which it is surrounded, curse the star of day? Let us hold fast to our republican faith. Let us still fight on, serene in conscience, though sad at heart, and fronting alike calumny and blame, exaggeration and ingratitude, error and wrong. Let us not deny the true faith because of heresy; let us reverence the ruins of all that was great in the past, but let us not linger among them. They are a potent symbol of the life of that Humanity whose children we are, but the future of life is beyond. The Pyramids are also sublime; but they are motionless—are tombs. For us, voyagers on "the great sea of Being," the insignia is duty, the condition of existence is motion.

III.

Enough of the errors contained in Renan's book. But how is it that such errors find a place there? Renan is an acute, at times a bold thinker. History is his familiar study, and he ought to have learned from it alike the law of progress and the methods by which that law is fulfilled. How is it that one who declares all faith in the supernatural extinct, yet retains his faith in the long extinct monarchical principle? Why such hasty discouragement with regard to his beloved France? Why seek to recall her to the worship of the past, while, with respect to all things else, his glance is turned (no matter if misconceiving it) towards the future? The ascending movement of democracy is as evident to those who dread it as to those who hail it with applause; it is a European fact; it rules and moves, not one, but all the manifestations of human life; repression is of no avail, for if repulsed on one point, it rises up more powerfully upon another. A hundred years of regularly increasing agitation prove a vitality which cannot die. How is it that Renan can hope to see it retrace its steps to the king of the middle ages, the *gentilhomme du village*, and the *curé de campagne*?

The field of democracy is furrowed by error. Ideas leading to consequences the most immoral, exaggerations as wild as dangerous, deface it in France and threaten it elsewhere; but why not attack these? Why not unite with other thinkers to form an apostolate which shall purify it from its errors, and render it all that it ought to be and is capable of becoming? Are not its very exaggerations in a great measure the result of irrational resistance on the one hand and ignorance on the other? The faults and mistakes of the present are sad realities, but they will

not endure for ever, and the utter impossibility of reaching the goal by tortuous paths, will prove their condemnation. In any case, we can never lead the wanderer into the right path by either compelling him to retrace his steps or denying him the faculty of motion. All the actual errors of democracy spring from one common source, from one primary error of direction given to the democratic idea; from the imperfect view taken of human life and of the world. And it is important to trace out this source, to examine this imperfect view. Renan does not stand alone; the same tendency is revealed by other political writers; but his former works have rendered his name influential among those superficial thinkers—too numerous everywhere—who, attracted and dazzled by occasional brilliancy of thought or fascination of form, fail to penetrate the fundamental conception which, however disguised, does in fact govern the whole of his writings.

Frankly then, although the form, language, and certain secondary ideas borrowed from our school, induce such careless and superficial readers to attribute a spiritualistic tendency to his works, the doctrine of Renan is, in fact, an emanation or *variation* of that Materialism which both misconstrues and impedes the recognition of the idea—progress, which is destined to become the synthesis and religious law of the new epoch. The materialism of Renan is not the brutal materialism of the atheists of the eighteenth century, and of the degenerate Germans of our own; it is the mild, veiled, and somewhat Jesuitical materialism of the Hegelian school. For the members of this school truth indeed exists, but it is relative, reflected; the result of time and place, and legitimate—no matter what shape it assume—as a manifestation of the *Ego*. The world indeed exists; but only as a succession of transitory

phenomena, to study, understand, or contemplate which is our part here below. The ideal exists, but only within, not without ourselves; it is the highest formula of *our* notions of the beautiful, the just, and the useful; a conception, not an aim.

Every reality, every *fait accompli* is, because it ought to be; in the fact of its existence lies its *reason* or *right* to exist. Every evolution, every phenomenon, is cause and effect in one. God does not exist, or it is useless to attempt the impossible enterprise of discovering whether He exists or not; but man *creates** Him, and tradition having made of Him an important historical element, it is useful to preserve the symbol and the name—all these are but consequences of that materialist conception which neither sees nor is capable of seeing aught in the world but a finite series of phenomena, produced by the *forces* of a certain quantity of necessarily finite matter, *fatally* linked together and destined to repeat themselves—circular movement, not progress.

The effect of ideas such as these upon the method of understanding history and the development of human things is obvious, and sufficiently explains the suggestions of Renan

* "Le mot DIEU étant en possession des respects de l'humanité, ce mot ayant pour lui une longue prescription, et *ayant été employé dans les belles poésies*, ce serait renverser toutes les habitudes du langage que de l'abandonner. Dites aux simples de vivre d'aspiration à la vérité, à la beauté, à la bonté morale, ces mots n'auront pour eux aucun sens. Dites-leur d'aimer Dieu, de ne pas offenser Dieu, ils vous comprendront á merveille. Dieu, Providence, immortalité, autant de bon vieux mots, un peu lourd peut-être, que la philosophie interprétera dans des sens de plus en plus raffinés, misa qu'elle ne remplacera jamais avec avantage. Sous une forme ou sous une autre, Dieu sera toujours le résumé de nos besoins supra-sensibles, la catégorie de l'idéal (c'est-à-dire, la *forme* sous laquelle nous concevons l'idéal)."

with regard to France. Having eliminated the existence of any absolute and supreme Ideal, and any providential or educational Law, the only remaining rule by which to judge men and things is fact. The *real*—the mutable, contingent and relative real—takes the place of the eternally *true*. All conception of collective life is rendered logically impossible. Analysis reigns supreme, but incapable of grasping other than facts, separately and successively observed, and deprived of all means of arriving at a comprehension of their origin, of arranging them in series, and estimating their true value. Tradition remains the sole criterion, the sole means of forming any notion as to the former growth and development of the peoples; a criterion necessarily arrested at the threshold of the future. The innate tendency of the human mind to reascend from fact to fact leads it to concentrate tradition, and seek its lessons in the earliest periods. A nation is, in the eyes of the materialist school, nothing more than the necessary and definite *expansion* of a primary germ (or fact) generative of a long series of necessary consequences. And even as the seed contains within it the finite series of manifestations which constitute the tree—a series which is only exhausted to repeat itself—so the nation, when the consequences of the first potent gush of life which called it into being are exhausted, can only renew her existence by a return to the source from which she originally derived her vitality and power. If, therefore, tradition prove the earliest vitality of the nation to have assumed a monarchical form, monarchy becomes, for the adepts of this school, a necessity. If it can be proved that liberty underwent a certain degree of development under monarchy, it is for them a sign that monarchy is the safeguard of liberty; and if it is clear that the patriciate opposed the attempted usurpations of monarchy in ages

past, it is a sign that a patriciate is necessary to the maintenance of the national equilibrium. The ideal of the government of a people therefore consists in the preservation of all the elements which contributed to its existence in the past, and establishing them side by side in the utmost possible equality.

It was upon this theory that Guizot proclaimed the eternity and eternal legitimacy of four elements—the theocratic, monarchic, aristocratic, and democratic—of all of which he traced the successive development in the political life of the peoples. And thus it was that Cousin proclaimed the secret of philosophy to consist in the union, by aggregation, of four elements—idealism, materialism, scepticism, and mysticism—because he found that all of them had existed in anterior epochs. As Hegel proclaimed that the end of progress had been reached by the institutions of Prussia, so did Cousin and Guizot proclaim the inviolability of the Constitution granted to France by Louis XVIII., wherein the four elements of the past were, in fact, more or less imperfectly represented.

Fatalism—whether assuming an aspect of optimism or pessimism—is the unavoidable outcome and consequence of the teachings of this school. And the consequences of fatalism are, the justification of evil and the substitution of contemplation for action. Who indeed shall condemn evil, if all things are inevitably linked together in a series of phenomena which are cause and effect in one, in virtue of certain laws and forces of matter, immutable because unintelligent? Why struggle against events, if the very fact of their occurrence declares their right to occur?

How many French, English, and German writers have we not of late years seen assume the *rôle* of learned apologists for evil, and profane the stern morality of

history by "rehabilitation" of Cæsar, Scylla, Nero, and Caligula!*

A spirit of mute, inert contemplation, which merely comprehends and admires, has, in the majority of thinkers, taken the place of the spirit of action which deduces, foresees, and transforms. The study of the past absorbs nearly all the intellectual men of the day: the character of nearly all the political, philosophical, and religious works which issue from the press is critical or historical; one might imagine that all consciousness of a future is extinguished amongst us. Art either laments, curses, or imitates. I know of no poetry, that of Poland alone excepted, which displays any sense of its true mission—that of arousing mankind to translate thought into action.

"Le savant ne se propose qu'un but spéculatif, sans aucune application directe à l'ordre des faits contemporains. . . . Le penseur ne se croit qu'un bien faible droit à la direction des affaires de sa planète, et, satisfait de la portion qui lui est échué, il accepte l'impuissance sans regret. *Spectateur dans l'univers*, il sait que le monde ne lui appartiens que comme sujet d'étude."

Those lines, written by Renan in the preface to his *Etudes d'Histoire religieuse*, sum up but too well the intellectual position of nearly all the thinkers of the day. It is in this school that Renan has acquired not only his habit of barren contemplation, but the monarchico-aristocratic remedy he proposes for the malady of France—the scepticism which lurks in the best pages of his works—his tendency to separate men of thought from the people—the profane vulgar, and that spirit of religious indifference which is so entirely distinct from tolerance.

* One of the ministers of Louis Napoleon, Duruy, attempted to justify himself and the Empire in a Latin thesis rehabilitating the memory and the crimes of Tiberius.

Accused, justly as I think, of having so written his *Life of Jesus* to conceal its real purpose, Renan declared in the introduction to *Les Apôtres* that he had had no purpose.

"Ces œuvres doivent être exécutées avec une suprême indifférence, comme si l'on écrivait pour une planète déserte. . . . Le premier principe de l'école critique, en effet, est que chacun admet en matière de foi ce qu'il a besoin d'admettre, et fait en quelque sorte le lit de ses croyances proportionné à sa mesure et à sa taille. Comment serions nous assez insensé pour nous mêler de ce qui dépend de circonstances sur lesquelles personne ne peut rien? . . . Pour moi, le jour on l'on pourrait me convaincre d'un effort pour attirer à mes ideés un suel adhérent qui n'y vient pas de lui-même on me causerait la peine la plus vive. J'en conclurais ou que mon esprit s'est laissé troubler dans sa libre et sereine allure, ou que quelque chose s'est appesanti en moi, *puisque je ne suis plus capable de me contenter de la joyeuse contemplation de l'univers.*"

Again :—

"Je sais que les recherches d'histoire religieuse touchent à des questions vives qui semblent exiger une solution. Les personnes peu familiarisées avec la libre spéculation ne comprennent pas les calmes lenteurs de la pensée; les esprits pratiques s'impatientent contre la science qui ne répond pas à leurs empressements. Défendons-nous de ces vaines ardeurs. Gardons-nous de rien fonder: restons dans nos Eglises respectives, profitant de leur culte séculaire et de leur tradition de vertu, participant à leur bonnes œuvres et jouissant de la poésie de leur passé. Ne repoussons pas leur intolérance. Pardonnons même à cette intolérance, car elle est, *comme l'égoïsme, une des nécessités de la nature humaine.*"

And again :—

"Le bon évêque Colenso a fait un acte d'honnêteté comme l'Eglise n'en a pas vu depuis son origine en écrivant ses doutes dès qu'ils lui sont venus. Mais l'humble *prêtre* catholique, en un pays étroit et timide, *doit* se taire. . . . La théorie n'est pas la pratique."

And finally :—

"Lucrèce et Sainte Thérèse, Aristophane et Socrate, Voltaire et François d'Assise, Raphaël et Vincent de Paul ont également raison d'être, et l'humanité serait moindre si un seul des éléments qui la composent lui manquait."

I know not whether rightly or wrongly, but I know that my whole soul rises up in indignation against the spirit of *quietism*, or, more frankly speaking, egotism, which breathes throughout the doctrine contained in the above lines.

The questions thus calmly dismissed are questions which have cost and are destined yet to cost humanity both tears and blood, and no thinking man has a right to regard them merely as a subject of analysis, of intellectual gymnastics; to remain indifferent to their practical solution, and to govern by the cold calculations of prudence or æsthetic predilection, the holiest duty assigned to the human creature—the duty of proselytism, of the apostolate of that which we hold to be the truth.

Intellect is the treasure, the sacred deposit confided to the thinker by God, in order that he may distribute it among those of his brother-men who are unable to reach the goal alone. Aristophanes and Socrates, the accuser and the victim, have indeed each of them their *raison d'être*, but on condition that we condemn the memory of the first and raise an altar in our hearts in remembrance of the martyrdom of the second. Tyranny also has, too often, its *raison d'être* in the corruption of a people; in the substitution of the egotism of interests for the religion of duty, in the adulation lavished upon power by materialist or cowardly men of letters, who flatter power for the sake of the enjoyments it can bestow; but the honest few are bound to fan the flame of virtue to rouse to resistance, and to wield both pen and sword against tyranny and tyrants. Evil is the blind unconscious instrument of progress in the world solely on condition of being combated, crushed, and gradually eliminated from the world in the name of progress; and such elimination does not impoverish but elevate and enrich humanity. We are here on earth not

to contemplate, but to transform created things; to found, as far as in us lies, the image of the "Kingdom of God" *on earth*—not to admire earth's contrasts. Egotism nearly always lurks beneath contemplation. Our world is not a *spectacle;* it is a field of battle, upon which all who in their hearts love justice, beauty, and holiness, are bound —whether as leaders or soldiers, conquerors or martyrs— to play their part.

I feel myself impelled to declare these things with double earnestness in a country like my own, where the minds of the young, so recently issued out of the darkness and silence of enforced immobility, are more than elsewhere eager after novel doctrines, little apt to penetrate their dangers, hasty of judgment, and far too ready to yield credence wheresoever they find external beauty of form or semblance of daring in the ideas expressed.

The school to which Renan belongs has—from Guizot downwards—misdirected the course of historic study and perverted all understanding of the past in France: it has powerfully contributed to warp that moral sense and blunt that spirit of action which can alone serve to unite men of thought with the people. The school confounds the history of political science and philosophy with the science and philosophy themselves; life, with some of its temporary manifestations; ideas, with the instruments employed to establish them upon the field of reality. It is a negation of progress, which is the continuous revelation of new ideas; of human liberty, which is the *responsible* choice between good and evil; of morality, which absolves or condemns; and of history, which is the record of its judgment.

To this school, our Italian school—if we are again to have an Italian school—will oppose the following simple but fruitful affirmations:—

Every existence has an aim. Life, human life, has achieved the consciousness of this fact; life is therefore a mission—the mission of reaching the aim: it consists in incessant activity upon the path towards it, and a perennial battle against the obstacles it encounters upon that path. The Ideal is not within, but beyond us and supreme over us: it is not the *creation*, but the gradual *discovery* of the human intellect. The law which directs the discovery is named Progress: the method by which progress is achieved is Association—the association of all the human faculties and forces. The ultimate discovery of the aim of life is assured by Providential design, but time and space are given to us wherein to achieve it, and are therefore the field of liberty and responsibility for each and all of us. Our choice lies between evil, which is egotism, and good, which is love and sacrifice for the sake of our fellow-men. The faculty of choice, of discovering the path of progress, having been bestowed upon us, social institutions are the means by which we incarnate our thought in action, and advance towards the realisation of the providential design.

Every collective work necessitates division of labour: the existence of distinct nations is a consequence of this necessity. Every nation has a special function, or mission, in the collective work, and a special aptitude fitting her to perform that function. This is her insignia, her baptism, the sign of her legitimacy. Each nation is one of the work-people of humanity, and labours for the advance of humanity towards the common goal and for the common good. Every nation which neglects to fulfil this special function betrays her mission, sinks into egotism, decays, and undergoes a period of expiation proportionate to her error or offence. For the separate nations, as for humanity, the various stages of education are named epochs. Every epoch reveals

one fragment of the Ideal—one line of the divine Idea. A philosophy prepares the way for the discovery; a religion then sanctifies the new idea, by elevating it into a *duty;* a political science then translates it gradually into facts, into the practical manifestations of life, and an art symbolises it for us.

The *initiation* of the new epoch—which is the solemn annunciation of a new principle—is accomplished by a revolution; the *evolution*—the gradual, pacific development of that principle—constitutes the subsequent life of the entire epoch. During that evolution the nations progressively adopt and employ those different elements which are their instruments of labour—their tools. Monarchies, patriciates, and priesthoods—all these are but the instruments of the nation, to be modified or changed according to the necessity of the times, and the greater or less power of service there is in them, until the whole people, awakened to full consciousness and comprehension of the principle, become its progressive interpreter.

Revolutions are to the nations and to humanity what instruction is to individuals.

The tradition of a people is also divided into periods, each of which is countersigned by a revolution, which points out and calls into action a new and better instrument in place of one worn out. That tradition cannot be rightly studied in one or several of its periods; the organisation of the new period cannot rightly be founded upon those elements which have proved useful in one or several periods of the past. Only from the study of the entire tradition of all the stages reached by the nation in its past progress towards the destined aim, can we direct our choice of the new element calculated most efficaciously to promote its further advance upon the path of the future.

THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED, FELLING-ON-TYNE.
2-08